TRENGWITH

W. GREGORY
HARRIS

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

WEST-COUNTRY VOLK

THE BODLEY HEAD

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TRENGWITH

A CHRONICLE OF CLERICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE IN WEST CORNWALL

By W. GREGORY HARRIS

WITH A PREFACE BY

SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH

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TO

MY DEAR WIFE

IN MEMORY OF

HAPPY CORNISH DAYS

Come, let us tramp from Zennor to Pendeen,
Through that lone land of brakes and boulders, where
One seldom meets another wayfarer ;
Where all is spacious, grand, wind-swept, and clean,—
And where Old Cornwall broods upon a scene
So weird and wild, that poets are distraught,
Searching a meaning which can ne'er be caught
No matter who the Seeker—or how keen.
By stone-built hamlets, and by gaunt, gray farms—
Rising midst billowing crofts where badgers lie,
And where the curlews call continually—
I'd have you pass, if you would know the charms
Awaiting you in this enchanted bourne,
So strangely lovely, and yet so forlorn.

Here, where the Spirit of the Keltic Prime
Still casts a wizard spell o'er land and sea,
You shall from all Life's petty cares win free,
And give scant heed to swiftly-passing Time :
Here shall you seek to sound in sonorous rime
The deep, sad music of the haunted hills,
Whilst the Atlantic's diapason fills
The echoing coombes with threnodies sublime.
The riot of the fox-glove, and the fern
Shall greet your eye, and larks shrill in the blue ;
Here, 'midst the furze and heather shall you learn
The best that Solitude can give to you ;
And all day long, throughout the gloom and gleam,
You shall fare forward in a faery dream.

W. G. H.

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH
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PREFACE

APART from a personal and private liking which it would be hard to define, I commend this book to the public on two definite grounds.

To begin with, I commend it to anyone who would understand the inside of Nonconformist Cornwall. Because our Duchy is remote, with three sides of it washed by the Atlantic and the fourth held by moorland—all enclosing its prehistoric secrets—it has become a romantic background for a succession of clever alien novelists, who admire its scenery and make it the setting of Cockney plots—amorous adventures of Bohemians and such-like, with its "natives" introduced (often ineptly) as comic chorus, and without a sense that they have a life and religion of their own which, if more capable of being exhibited as funny, are at least saner than the manners and morals of Bohemia.

By consequence, to anyone with Cornwall in his breed and bone, the Cornwall of their tales is but a Scenic contraption compared with any book which, however "inartistic," *understands*. I would give the whole lot in exchange for a couple of small books—*A Corner of Old Cornwall* and *Christmas in Cornwall Sixty Years Ago* by Mrs. Bonham—written, I think, not inartistically by rule, yet with the sure waywardness of intimate knowledge. In

short, no one can write of this part of the world who does not take Methodism seriously, to respect it. I am not a Wesleyan; but I see, or seem to see, grave dangers within the Wesleyan Church: dangers not to be met or overcome by Methodist "Union," which at the best will be something a little better (not much) than a mechanical reorganization, a matter of increased "efficiency" rather than of "edification." I foresee, indeed—and with genuine regret since

> Men we are, and must grieve when even the Shade
> Of that which once was great is passed away—

that Methodism must dwindle and may even eventually perish if it continue on lines of *negative* dissent and clannish separatism. For the Gospels have very little use for negatives, being all for the active and positive virtues, and a preoccupation with negatives and *verbotens* leads to judging one's neighbour, to "compounding for sins we are inclined to by damning those we have no mind to," to that self-righteousness which He who commanded "Judge not," and left us the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, so scathingly rebuked; while separatism not only abets this self-consciousness and spiritual pride in being "not as other men," but in practice tends to wire-pulling, and to intrigue in affairs that have nothing properly to do with religion.

The stand of the old Methodists was, indeed, magnificently sincere. No one not realizing that primitive sincerity—certainly no "intellectual," deriding many of the (to him) grotesque forms it

took—can ever attain to an understanding of these folk. To be understood, they and their story, and the inheritors of it in country places, must be studied with charity, with imagination—above all, without condescension. For salvation must be something so Catholic that our little superiorities and snobberies are simply swallowed up in it. None the less, in my firm belief, Methodism and the Established Church of England have alike little chance of the future unless they widen their ambits to meet in some such *spiritual* reconciliation as that most loveable, most English, most undeservedly neglected school of men—the Cambridge Platonists—taught in the seventeenth century; re-pleaded for by the Dean of St. Paul's the other day in his Hulsean Lectures (1925-6). Between Ecclesiasticism on the one hand and the "dissidence of dissent" on the other, I believe the true *via media* to be as gentle and courageous as Christian's way between the lions, and to lead as straight to the Celestial City.

Now, if the reader will turn to the fifth Chapter of this book, to consider it, he cannot but remark a generosity, a fairness, quite unlike the old wearisome "stuffy" Church—V—Dissent polemic. The writer is no solitary, rising from his manuscript to pace his study with an "Aha, I have demolished him!" The window is open; the curtain stirs; and best of all, the writer is no young revoltist, heady with notions, but a mature Minister who has come through it all and keeps through Charity, with old faith a widening hope.

The freshness of his vision goes well (I think),

as it contrasts piquantly, with a certain primness of phrase, a pastoral accent, acquired by long service in the pulpit and honest because now a part of the man. But in the many tender, thoughtful poems scattered among the following pages the ministerial habit falls wide open discovering a most human breast.

I dare say, however, that the Reader will care rather to know my opinion of this book as representatively Cornish in its pictures and its echoes of our dialect—in something of which I am supposed to have knowledge—than in any speculations on the future of Methodism. Well, after a long practice in trying to reproduce my countrymen's speech I find myself tending more and more towards relying on the lilt of it and letting the phonetics take care of themselves, without teasing the reader by curious dots, accents, spellings. To choose a palmary comparison, I believe that William Barnes would be far more widely recognized for the noble poet he is, had he flung away two-thirds of his paper-apparatus—his phonetical devices, dodges, diæreses—and trusted his "Dorset" to the ear simply as Thomas Hardy does. But Mr. Harris's renderings are skilful, his lilt almost impeccable, and—this is far more important—the "atmosphere" of his book as Cornish as can be.

ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH.

The Haven, Fowey,
Cornwall.
August, 1927.

FOREWORD

THIS sketch of church and social life in Cornwall has been written with the idea of giving a somewhat more realistic account of rural happenings than is usual in conventional fiction.

Those whose descriptions of a particular locality and people are dependent upon superficial observations often find it difficult to steer safely between the Scylla and Charybdis of an exaggerated idealization on the one hand and a careless caricature on the other.

Cornwall has suffered a good deal from writers who have noted and exploited her oddities, but who have missed her deeper aspects of thought and character, especially such as are concerned with Religion—features which are familiar enough to those whose knowledge of the inner life of the County is the result of long acquaintance and sympathetic insight.

The story of a ministerial year in a Cornish Methodist Circuit offers no scope for sensational writing, but there are times when sensation palls, and when a reader is content to dwell upon thoughts and scenes which are as true to the actual scheme of things as the Writer's knowledge and memory can possibly make them.

That " Trengwith " may find many such readers is the devout wish of the author.

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TRENGWITH

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH
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TRENGWITH

CHAPTER I

THE PARSON ARRIVES

THE Village of Trengwith lies somewhat out of the beaten track of visitors to the Duchy of Cornwall. To reach this place you must alight at Gwavas Road Station on the Great Western Line, and then walk or drive three miles or so along a lonely road which rises and dips by corn and grass fields—alternated by patches of rough moorland with occasional traces of abandoned mine-workings, —until at last it suddenly plunges down into the heart of one of the quaintest and quietest villages in the County.

Trengwith consists of a picturesque jumble of thatched and whitewashed cottages; a square-towered church built of Cornish granite, and dating from the fourteenth century; a plain but substantial Methodist chapel and schoolroom; an inn (the "Duchy Arms"); a shop filled with jumbled merchandise (John Penberthy, Proprietor); a large farm-house with extensive out-buildings (Trengwith Barton); a coast-guard station; several comfortable private residences; a Council School, a blacksmith's workshop and a carpenter's yard; in

fact, all that a self-respecting "Church Town" may reasonably be expected to possess Trengwith can boast of, and, to the artist-eye, the situation and attractiveness of the village leave little to be desired.

On the last Friday evening in August the Reverend Arthur Willesford arrived at Gwavas Road Station with his modest luggage, consisting chiefly of clothes and books. He had brought his golf-clubs also, for although there were as yet no proper links at Trengwith he had been told that the "towans" would afford an excellent practice-ground for the improvement of his strokes. The new arrival found a homely-looking waggonette waiting in the road outside the station, and was informed by a porter, who had spotted the new "passon," that Peter Harris was waiting to drive him down to Trengwith.

Peter proved to be a genial charioteer, with a Cornishman's curiosity and love of gossip, and during the drive the young minister was able to gather a few interesting facts about his new home and people.

"Iss, 'tez a braäve l'il plaace where we do b'long to live," said Peter.

"'Tez quiet surely, but that's zackly what you do want I reck'n, comin' from Lunnon, which I be told ez a racketin', roarin', gurt plaäce sure nuff.

"You be lookin' a bit white about the gills, sir, makin' so bold, but th' Atlantic breezes'll do 'ee a passel o' good, an' set 'ee up proper.

"Our last praicher was a wisht, peaky l'il feller when he come here three year agone, but he picked up wunnerful down along o' we!

"Termenjis walker a was, an' fond o' boatin' an' fishin'. He put on flesh amazin' an' was a proper champion when he left. We was all ter'ble fond of un too, for a 'omely man was Mr. Hopper an' no mistake, an' a good praicher too, but I reck'n, sir, that you'll get on all right if you baint too high-minded, we be a plain folk you see."

Arthur assured Peter that he was not at all "high-minded," and that his one desire was to take up his predecessor's work heartily, and to do what he could for the welfare of his people.

"You be goin' to lodge at William Mann's," said Peter. "He's a carpenter, an' a good paicable man. His Missis ez a bit sharp in her way, but her's a fine bowerly wumman. Her's a capital wan for makin' pasties an' saffern caäke; Mr. Hopper filled out wunnerful, an' praised his kitchen amazin'!"

Peter rattled garrulously on, and during the drive "homalong" Arthur was content to listen to his guide's artless comments on various topics connected with the village community which made up his little world.

"There's the church, sir, tez a ancient buildin' surelie, but most of the folk to Trengwith do belong to go to chapel, not but what the church be granderer-like.

"Passon Russell, our vicar, be a good man accordin' to his lights I s'pose, but what he wants to traäpse about the plaäce in petticoats for, wi' a pecooliar-lookin' 'at, like a Roman Catholic Pope, tez hard for to say. Things like that be no good to we.

"He do praich very well," continued Peter, "but tez all about the 'Church' for the most part, an' tez the *Gospel*—good soul-savin' doctrine, that we do want to hear, an' thank the Lord we gets that up to chapel from the Rounders an' the Locals."

Arthur concluded from these remarks that the line between Church and Chapel was somewhat strictly drawn at Trengwith, and he was quite able to understand the perplexity of the rustic mind in matters pertaining to Anglo-Catholic ritual and doctrine. He did not, however, somewhat to Peter's disappointment, express any decided opinion concerning the vicar and his "goin's on," being content to wait and judge things for himself, for it was possible that he and the vicar of Trengwith might have more in common than was dreamt of in Peter's simple philosophy.

It was about half-past eight when the waggonette came to the top of the steep hill leading down to the village. Here Peter pulled up for a few moments in order that his passenger might enjoy the view. Trengwith looked very peaceful in the valley below them, and the scene seaward was indescribably lovely. The sun was slowly sinking, and the heavens were gorgeous with splashes of crimson and amber. The far-stretching sea was bathed in the glory of the sunset; already the revolving light had commenced to gleam palely from its rock-island off the North headland, and the murmur of the waves sweeping the wide, solitary beaches sounded like the diapason of an organ as the landward-breeze bore it up the valley.

Arthur's poetic nature responded readily to all this enchanting loveliness. Truly here at Trengwith God would draw near with His Holy Angels. Here he would give himself up to work and prayer. He could, he thought, enter into the spirit of those monks and hermits of old, who, settling in far Cornwall, in dark and troublous times, had shone as lights in the world, and who had worthily adorned the doctrine of their Lord.

Since his appointment to Trengwith had been confirmed, Arthur had read every book he could procure dealing with Cornwall and its historical associations, and he was truly amazed, as most "up-country" people generally are, to find what a wealth of legendary and ecclesiastical lore the County enshrines. There was St. Godfrey for instance, of whom he had read, the remains of whose tiny church and hermitage, now almost completely buried by the encroaching sand, may still be traced on Trengwith towans, bearing witness to that sincere Faith, and that love of holy solitude, which characterized those who, in an Age far distant from our own, fled from a bad world's noise and folly that they might the better hear the accents of the Divine voice.

They made them lodges in the wilderness,
Or built them cells beside the shadowy sea,
And there they dwelt with angels in a dream:
There they unrolled the volume of the Book,
And filled the fields of the Evangelist
With antique thoughts that breathed of Paradise.

On this still autumn evening Trengwith's charm was irresistible. A melancholy yet sweet solemnity pervaded the whole place like a poetic legacy from the immemorial Past. Arthur was so absorbed in his romantic reverie that he scarcely noticed when Peter restarted his horse, and he was only aroused by the sudden stopping of the carriage at the door of his destined lodging.

"Here you be," said Peter, who had begun to contrast the new-comer's reserve somewhat unfavourably with the ready flow of conversation to which he had been accustomed in his frequent drives to and from the station with his late pastor, Mr. Hopper, "An' a good job too, for I reck'n you be 'gone in,' an' be ready for your mait."

The waggonette had stopped before a long straggling cottage, half of which was a carpenter's shop, and the other half the dwelling-house.

Mrs. Mann was awaiting the coming of the new "praicher" with the composed mien of one who was well aware of her value to the community. For many years she had been accustomed to "do for" the young ministers who had been stationed at Trengwith, and being a first-rate cook, and as clean as a new pin, her services were always greatly appreciated by her clerical lodgers. Arthur soon found that Peter had not exaggerated concerning his landlady's culinary skill. The supper-table was laid, and the bill of fare proved most inviting to one who had been travelling all day. Red mullet, caught in the Bay that very afternoon and cooked beautifully, a piece of farm-house ham, pickled in the old style, followed by junket and

Cornish cream, formed a meal which Lucullus himself would not have despised. No wonder that Mr. Hopper had filled out so amazingly if this was to be taken as a fair sample of Mrs. Mann's *cuisine*. Supper over, Arthur unpacked his boxes and began arranging his books on the empty shelves; he also, with his landlady's permission, made certain alterations in the disposition of the furniture, until at last the room presented the appearance of as cosy a little den as a studious man with simple tastes could desire.

It was nearly eleven o'clock before Arthur had got things to his liking, and after he had been introduced to "Willyum," Mrs. Mann's worthy and unobtrusive husband—who expressed the hope that the new minister would be "very comferable," he took his candle and ascended the clean-scrubbed stairs leading to his bedroom, where he found everything in apple-pie order, and, ere he fell into a deep and dreamless sleep between the spotless, lavender-scented sheets, he thanked Providence for bringing him to such a delightful haven of rest.

2

Awaking early next morning, Arthur decided to bathe before breakfast. Mrs. Mann, however, would not allow him to start for the beach until he had eaten one of her "saffern buns," and drunk a glass of new milk.

"Do 'ee be careful, sir," she said, "for they sands be treacherous in parts. If you keep

straight on across the towans by the sheep-track, an' go down to the beach onderneath the coast-guard's hut, you'll be all right. The tide be out, an' you'll find a lovely pool where they do belong to swim. We do call it 'sheep's-pool' and no one was ever drownded there that I've heard tell of, but farther out tez risky, onless you've got some one 'long with 'ee to tell 'ee where tez saäfe."

Arthur thanked her, promised to be careful, and started off in his old flannels. It was grand out on the towans in the early morning. The spirit of pensiveness which had possessed him on the preceding evening was now succeeded by a mood of effervescent joy. This is the way in which Cornwall works her charms; her moods are so variable, and each one has an aspect peculiar to her own mystic, baffling self.

The towans, which are such a feature of this part of the Cornish coast, are dunes which have been formed into the most fantastic shapes by the action of the wind upon the shifting sand, and which have gradually become covered with short, crisp turf and clumps of rushes, which latter grow in great abundance, and are used by the farmers for thatching their ricks. The wild thyme gave out its sweet perfume, and a lark was trilling rapturously in the cloudless sky as Arthur made his way to the beach. He had brought a golf-club with him, and amused himself by taking shots as he walked along.

Ten minutes brought him to the edge of the cliffs, which are not high in the immediate vicinity of Trengwith, and soon he was on the magnificent

sands which are the glory of the neighbourhood. The tide was far out, and the scene which presented itself to the new-comer's delighted gaze was a wonderful one.

Emerald waves were breaking on the yellow sands reluctantly, as if loath to lose their curves in creamy drifts of foam. Fantastic rocks, overgrown with oar-weed, shadowed mysterious, silent pools, "translucent legacies of the ebbing tide." These pools when examined seemed like miniature fairy-gardens, resplendent with pink sea-anemones, and displaying a rare wealth of marine vegetation. Arthur beheld, with a Nature lover's delight, the interesting denizens of these rocky aquaria. Here was a sidling crab, there a phantom "school" of prawns, and here again a shoal of tiny darting fish, with silver-gleaming sides.

Lifting his eyes to the horizon, Arthur delighted in the Ocean's "darkling blue," flecked with white-horses racing shorewards, and his musical ear sensed the sonorous organ-music echoing in deep cliff-caverns, haunts of mystery. The air was alive with sea-birds screaming weirdly as they flew to and from their fishing-grounds. He marked with keen delight how the gleaming sands flashed back the sunlight into million-pointed brilliance, until, dazzled with the blinding splendour, he turned with a sense of relief to where the heather and golden gorse mantled the distant headlands with royal magnificence—a sight for gods and men.

Arthur had the beach to himself, and finding a deep pool not far from the cave where he undressed

he plunged in, taking keen pleasure in the stinging tonic afforded by his salt-water bath. Emerging from the pool he raced along the sands like a schoolboy to meet the incoming tide, and, in spite of Mrs. Mann's warning, to wrestle for a few glorious moments with the breakers as they hissed foaming to the shore.

On Trengwith beach the sea is seldom quite calm. Even on still summer days the Atlantic ground-swell is much in evidence. The prospect seaward is always grand, and Arthur realized that on these wide solitary beaches he would gain constant inspirations from Nature in her simplest and sublimest moods.

Returning to his lodgings, refreshed in mind and body, he found an excellent breakfast awaiting him, and having despatched it with a mighty appetite, to the delight of Mrs. Mann, he got out his books and papers, and prepared for a close morning's study.

To-morrow, he reflected, would see the commencement of his ministry at Trengwith, and he felt somewhat perplexed to know how best to shape his messages to the people. He was aware that his style of preaching was bookish and academical —too much so perhaps, but he had every hope that he would be able to find his way to the hearts and minds of his hearers. It was his business, he reminded himself, to place himself mentally in line with the villagers, who, however indifferent they might be to technical, theological matters, would be quite able to appreciate the heart of the Christian Gospel if it were presented in a simple

and sympathetic way. At any rate he was conscious of a strong desire to promote the best interests of those to whom he had been sent to minister, and so, with a good heart, he set himself to prepare two sermons which he trusted might interest and help all who would attend the services which he was to conduct on the morrow.

3

Sunday was a perfect September day from dawn till dusk. The sun was warm, and a steady breeze blew in from the sea. There was a slight tang of autumn in the air, but the trees had scarcely begun to change colour, and the villagers' gardens, which he passed on his way "up to chapel," were full of gay flowers, asters, dahlias, geraniums, and Michaelmas daisies predominating. It was only to be expected, on the first Sunday in September, with a "new praicher" in the pulpit, that attendance at the services should be unusually good. Besides, it was the Harvest Festival, the celebration of which is very popular in most places, but especially so in rural districts where so many of the worshippers are directly dependent upon the soil for their livelihood. Saturday evening had been a busy time for the "ladies" and young people of the congregation. The previous Sunday's notice, asking for gifts of flowers, fruit and vegetables for decorative purposes, had met with a fine response from all classes, and the assembled decorators were at first somewhat bewildered with the superabundant material with

which they had to deal. Many of the helpers, however, were old hands at this annual task, and soon a scheme of decoration on time-honoured lines was evolved. Sheaves of corn on each side of the rostrum, bunches of grapes dangling from the front of the reading-desk, tables beneath piled high with all kinds of horticultural trophies—enormous apples, mighty marrows, tomatoes, carrots, parsnips, potatoes—everything, in fact, to emphasize "the Crown of the Year." Each window-sill had its pile of garden-stuff, beetroots were suspended from effective vantage points, the pillars were wreathed with Old-man's-beard and other trailers, and flowers were placed wherever they could make "a brave fine show." The total effect, as viewed for the first time by the young minister after his entrance into the chapel from the little vestry, where he had met his stewards for the first time (John Trewhella and Oliver Trembath), was striking in the extreme to one who like himself had never beheld such lavish materialistic evidence of man's gratitude to Divine Providence, as that which was now expressed by the pious offerings of the Trengwithians.

The morning service was a very happy and inspiring one, at least the preacher himself felt it to be so. The freshness and beauty of the morning and the sight of the well-filled pews stimulated him to make the best of his first opportunity. The time-honoured harvest hymns were heartily sung, led by a large and well-trained choir of girls and young men, with a sprinkling of veterans of both sexes, the schoolmaster, John Lane, acting as

organist. Arthur's sermon was on "God and Nature."

He dealt first of all with Man in the hands of Nature, and spoke of the age-long struggle which tillers of the soil have ever been engaged in to counteract the difficulties caused by Nature's capricious, or apparently capricious forces. The hostility of Nature, he argued, was a moral lesson though expressed in a physical form. Nature had cruel aspects, but she was not to be thought of only as "red in tooth and claw." There were beneficent forces ever at work, and Man's business was to get into line with Nature, and to help her, by his intelligence and practical skill, to supply his necessities. This part of the discourse contained some striking quotations in poetry and prose, from authors possessing special insight into the laws and principles underlying familiar physical facts. From the contemplation of Nature in its scientific and evolutionary aspects, Arthur passed on to consider the idea of God as the creator and controller of all the forces of the universe, and showed how the Harvest Festival brought home to them the fact of the Divine Fatherhood. Apart from God they could have no satisfactory conception of the beauty and purpose of the universe. The very first business of religion was to acknowledge the necessity of the Supernatural, and upon the conception that is entertained of God the nature and quality of religion in any soul or race will depend. The study of natural phenomena only serves to bring home to us a sense of our own littleness and frailty, and of God's unutterable majesty and power.

To know God then, to believe in Him, and to come into line with His will, so far as we can grasp it, is the whole duty of Man.

On this note the sermon ended. It was listened to with marked attention, and it was evident that the young minister had made a good general impression, although the seasoned sermon-tasters in the congregation would for certain have their views to express over the dinner-tables of Trengwith. Indeed, the critical process started in the vestry as soon as the two stewards had bidden their minister "good morning," and were preparing to count the collection.

"Well, what do 'ee think of un?" said John Trewhella, a well-known stickler for Religion on the old lines.

"A braäve, well-set-up young fella," replied Oliver Trembath, a man of more liberal views than his colleague. "He'll do, I reck'n, he's got a head-piece, an' his langwidge is first-class, no halin' or draggin' for a word, it do pour out nice an' suent, an' his ideas be grand, baint they?"

"Yes," rejoined Trewhella, "'twas well enough so far as it went, but what about the *Gospel?* He never mentioned the atonin' blood, or showed the plan of salvation. These College trained men be wonderful disappointin', I zim he've a missed a grand oppertoonity of bringin' home soul-savin' truth to the people."

"I baint so sure o' that," said Trembath. "To my mind he opened up his subjick in fine style, an' he has given us zummat to think about an' no mistake; you can't have every doctring in one

sermon, an' what he had to say about the wonderful works o' God all round us is just what is needed at Harvest-time."

"Ah well," was Trewhella's response, "we'll see how he goes on, but I baint one to set much store 'pon everlootion, science, fillosofy, an' the likes o' that. What I looks for is the sincere milk o' the word, wi' no trimmin's, there's too much o' this here spekkerlatin' nowadays, an' us must get back to the old revival lines, an' expect to see the penitent form crowded wi' seekers for salvation once more."

"All praichers baint built the same way," answered Trembath, "an' I for one be glad of it. I likes to hear the Truth looked at from differ'nt pints o' view, an' I baint a bit feared but what our new Reverend will give a good account of himself, but we must be patient, an' give him time to find his bearin's."

The conversation ended here, and the two worthies proceeded to count the offertory money, discovering to their great satisfaction that all morning collections for years past had been exceeded on this occasion, which was certainly to be regarded as a feather in the young preacher's cap.

In the evening the chapel was crowded to excess. The Choir excelled itself in two rather florid anthems, full of the runs and repetitions so popular with rural congregations. Almost every family in the village and neighbourhood was represented, irrespective of creed; for the Harvest Festival was one of the great attractions of the year, and everybody who was able "belonged to come."

Arthur felt the responsibility of having to lead the devotions and influence the hearts and minds of those present, but even John Trewhella admitted that "No one could a praiched a better sermon or bin more in earnest." The evening discourse was on "The Bread of Life," and consisted of a simple exposition, followed by an evangelical appeal, such as Cornish folk dearly love. There were frequent "amens" and "alleluias" from the irrepressibles in the congregation, and the general impression of the service was well summed up by old Father Pearce, another of the "auld lichts" of Trengwith chapel. "Ah, my friends, *that's* what I call praichin', why a child cud car it away!"

CHAPTER II

A DAY OFF AND A WELCOME MEETING

ARTHUR decided that Monday should be an off day, at least until the evening, when a meeting was to be held in the chapel in order to give him a public welcome to Cornwall and to the St. Penza Circuit. He was glad to be afforded this early opportunity of getting into touch with his new constituency, but for a few hours at least he resolved to take things easily and to extend his knowledge of the neighbourhood.

Accordingly after breakfast he strolled off across the "Garrack," taking some lunch with him. Being something of an entomologist, he hoped to obtain specimens of the lepidoptera peculiar to the district, so a butterfly net was included in his equipment. Mrs. Mann informed him before he started that the people had been "wonderful well plaized" with the Sunday services, and expressed the opinion that the "Tay and Mittin'" that evening was likely to beat all records.

"You are giving me an abundant entrance into my little Kingdom," said the young minister. "I know it is washing day, Mrs. Mann, so as you have given me my lunch I shall not turn up until just in time to change and get up to the schoolroom."

"All right, my dear," was Mrs. Mann's response. "I'll get on with the work, an' 'tis just so well for you to go for a bit of a traäpse rather than for 'ee to be porin' over a passel o' bukes. You'll come back brave an' leary though I reck'n, but there'll be plenty o' bread an' craim, an' saffern caäke up to the tay, an' that'll stiffen 'ee up clivver for the meetin'.

"Tez a bit of a ordeal for 'ee too," continued Mrs. Mann, "sticked up there 'pon the platform, wi' all the folks geekin' at 'ee as if you was a arkanyel or a cherrybim. But, Lor', my dear, all the new ministers do belong to go through it every three years, an' in a week or two you won't be a stranger. We'll make 'ee feel at home here to Trengwith, an' you'll get on fine."

"What's thik green bag for, sir?" she inquired.

Arthur explained that he wanted to obtain some butterflies for his collection.

"There now," said Mrs. Mann. "You'm like old Passon Jewell up to Treroach. He's a ter'ble 'and for collectin' insecks; my cousin, Mary Ann Tresize, do keep house for'n, an' wan day when I was up there th' old passon took me into his study, an' showed me raw upon raw o' butivul insecks, all set out in arder in drawers lined wi' cark, an' sticked in wi' pins.

"There's insecks *and* insecks," Mrs. Mann reflected. "I can get on wi' butterflies very well an' I love to see 'em flyin' about the flowers in the garden, but if there's wan kind of inseck more than another that I can't abide tez *blackbittles*, gashly critters *they* be an' no mistaäke!"

"They are certainly not so attractive as butterflies," said Arthur, as he started off in the direction of the cliffs.

It was with a glorious sense of freedom that he gave himself up to the pleasure of this solitary excursion. Although it was getting rather late in the year for butterfly hunting, he was delighted to find the narrow road leading up to the north cliffs literally alive with *vanessa cardui*, the beautiful "painted ladies" of the entomological world. To see one settle on a tall flower-crowned plant, and open and shut its exquisitely coloured wings, as if exulting in its own loveliness, was a pure delight to the artistic eye, and, though he did not use his net very diligently, he found sufficient enjoyment in watching the rapid evolutions of these lovely creatures as they flaunted their charms in the sunshine. At another spot Arthur saw a sight very common in this locality. The reeds which grow so abundantly on the sandy soil of the towans are the favourite breeding-places of the pretty little "seven spot" Burnet moth. Many of the reeds had chrysalids attached to them, some were mere empty cases, from others the moths were just emerging, and an observant eye could perceive many of the perfect insects clinging to the reeds, or flying past in the sunshine, their brilliant crimson spots contrasting with the deep bluish-green ground colour of their wings.

Leaving the towans Arthur made straight for Godfrey Point. He crossed the narrow bridge spanning a stream which seemed in a desperate hurry to get to the sea. The water was a bright

red colour, derived from the metallic deposits of the inland mines. He noted the big sheds erected by a newly-formed tin-streaming company. The sands at this end of Trengwith beach are rich in particles of tin, the accumulation of centuries. Experts had visited the locality and after prospecting for some weeks had induced certain capitalists to buy up the rights from Cap'n Penfound, who for years, with very primitive plant, had made a good living here as a "tin streamer." The "Company" now had modernized the whole concern. A double line of black poles stretched right across the "Garrack" to intercept the cables from a distant power-station, and great results were being looked for under these new conditions. The net result, of course, was "on the lap of the gods," but most people were inclined to think that there was "something in it." So far the only thing "in it" was the shareholders' capital, but it was reasonable to hope that gratifying dividends would be declared in time.

Leaving the tin-works Arthur followed the path along the cliff-edge which led to Godfrey Point. It was a fine, fresh morning, the sky was a deep cobalt blue, with here and there white cloud-masses which were gradually dwindling under the attacks of the sun. Between Godfrey Point and the lighthouse the sea was as dark as indigo, and the white tower, with its burnished lantern-cap, made a picturesque addition to the seascape as it stood in bold relief upon the huge island of rock which formed its pedestal.

Following a zigzag path up the cliff Arthur

soon found himself on the summit of the headland, and with keen interest began to explore the coast. For miles he tramped through great tracts of purple heather, now and then descending to some sandy cove that he might better watch the big, green waves breaking on the pebbly shore. It was a morning of intoxicating delight. Rabbits, alarmed by his unexpected intrusion into their domains, scuttled in dozens down precipitous declivities to the safety of their burrows; sea-gulls wheeled and screamed protestingly overhead; and down on the rock-ridges, nearest to the water, he saw long solemn lines of black cormorants (or shags, as they are called in Cornwall) keeping watch over their fishing-grounds. Occasionally one would dive, and as often as not would reappear with a fish in its beak, to be at once conveyed to some secluded banqueting-hall beneath the towering cliffs.

Tired of walking and exploring, at last Arthur found a luxurious couch of heather, under the shade of a great granite boulder, and gave himself up to rest and reflection. It was not for nothing that he had come to Cornwall. This one heavenly morning had given him intense pleasure. His deepest feelings had been stirred by the sight of Nature in some of her grandest aspects. He longed for a poet's pen that he might put into words the lovely visions which held him in thrall; that he might, like "Hawker of Morwenstowe," leave behind him some deathless records of the spiritual meaning which haunted this romantic coast. Perhaps some day the power of expression

might come. Just now he must be content to steep his spirit in the wonder and beauty of his new surroundings. At any rate he could often come here and let Nature do her perfect work in his soul.

Hour after hour passed by; he ate and enjoyed his solitary lunch, after which he tried to read a book he had brought with him. The strong sea air, however, had made him very drowsy, and presently he fell fast asleep, awaking to find that the afternoon was well advanced, and that he would have to hurry if he was to be in time for the gathering at the chapel.

He just managed to get home in time to change into clerical dress, and when he entered the schoolroom he found a large company assembled and simmering with excitement, settling themselves for the "tea-drinking," which was presently in full swing.

How the Cornish people love these homely functions! "Up the Country," they are more or less formal affairs, but in Cornwall they are full of fun and sociality. What piles of "splits" and "saffern-cake" were consumed. Arthur was amazed at the gastronomical capacity of several of his new parishioners. One old man, Jimmy Bishop, appeared to be a notorious tea consumer. Cup after cup he negotiated, until at last he confessed that he was vanquished, and when rosy-faced Mrs. Hosking, who was "pouring" at Jimmy's table, pressed him to have "just wan more cup," he declared that it was a physical impossibility—at least he did not use these Johnsonian terms.

but regretfully explained that his inability to accede to Mrs. Hosking's request was owing to the fact that " My back teeth is under watter already ! "

2

The meeting which followed in " the adjoining sanctuary," as the superintendent styled the chapel, was one of the heartiest and best attended ever held at Trengwith. Those who only know Methodism from the outside have no idea of the quality of the speaking on such occasions. Arthur's superintendent, the Rev. John Fairweather, whom he now met for the first time, proved to be a shrewd and genial man, who gave the people a speech full of humour and common-sense, and which sounded ever and again a deep spiritual note. Mr. Fairweather was evidently a great favourite at Trengwith, and his address was enthusiastically applauded. Several of the leading laymen of the St. Penza Circuit had come out to take part in the welcome meeting, and Arthur was delighted with their crisp, capable utterances. They appeared to be men possessing knowledge as well as feeling, and the new-comer was glad to think that the Church to which he belonged was able to make use of such men in her meetings and synods.

Arthur himself received a warm welcome when he rose to speak. His services on the previous day had prepossessed the people in his favour. His hearers had instinctively recognized in their new minister one who was desirous of doing his best

for them in the pulpit and out. He spoke briefly on the need for concentration on spiritual matters, and asked for their sympathetic co-operation with him in the work he was commencing.

At the end of the meeting some of the local officials spoke. John Trewhella was in an unusually gracious mood, and abstained from pessimistic remarks. The most memorable part of his speech was that which referred to a "vision" which had recently been vouchsafed to him.

"I must tell 'ee, my friends," he exclaimed, "somethin' that did come to me last night by way of expayrience. 'Tez wrote in the Good Old Buke that 'Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall draim draims.' Now last night I had a bewtivul draim. I draimed I was to a prayer-mittin', an' who do 'ee think was conductin' that there mittin'?"

John paused, as if awaiting an answer, but none being forthcoming, he continued his narration:

"I'll tell 'ee who 'twas, 'twas the *King!* King Gaärge the vifth, our Christian Monarch, who do raid, so I be told, a chapter o' the Bible every day, God bless'n.

"Yes, there was the King, conductin' that there prayer-mittin', an' he'd got a concertina, an' was playin' away lovely!

"I do take that draim to signify that us be goin' to have a revival here to Trengwith," cried John with enthusiasm.

"Of course, dear friends, I do knaw very well that 'twas only a draim. P'raps the King never 'andled a concertina in his life, but I zeed'n an'

yurd'n too in thicky draim, an' these draims an' visions o' the night baint to be took lightly. There's gwain to be a gurt stirrin' up, an' us must prepare for it."

The younger members of the congregation appeared to be highly amused at John's psychologic experiences, but they listened with great attention to the few words which were spoken in conclusion by his co-steward, Oliver Trembath.

Oliver was greatly respected for his simplicity and piety, and for the breadth of his charity.

"Dear friends," he said, "lev us hold up the hands of our dear young minister. He've a-come to Trengwith in the naäme o' the Lord, to widen our vision, an' strengthen our faith. Oh, what need there is of 'pure an' undefiled religion' in these days of noise an' hurry. 'Tis worse in town than in the country I be told, but even here to Trengwith how many there be who be livin' without God, an' without 'ope. Lev us shaw our new minister that we be in downright earnest to spread scripshural holiness throughout the land. Lev us help'n all we can, an' as a Church an' people lev us come to the help o' the Lord against the mighty. Lev us cast down imaginations, an' every high thing that be exalted above the livin' God, an' lev us bring everything in subjection to Jesus Christ!"

And all the people said "Amen," and when the welcome meeting closed shortly after all agreed that the outlook for minister and people was bright with promise.

CHAPTER III

ROUND ABOUT THE CIRCUIT

ARTHUR WILLESFORD was now fairly launched, and it was not long before he found that the programme of work arranged for him by his superintendent, "on the plan," was one which made a full demand upon his energies, mental and physical. Those who are ignorant of the machinery of a wide Methodist circuit would be surprised to find how many and how varied are the claims upon the time and thought of a minister. Arthur found that the Harvest Festival at Trengwith was but a prelude to a series of similar functions held throughout the circuit. Being a "new minister," the officials at most of the chapels had put in a claim for his services, and his mornings, for the first month, were spent in preparing fresh sermons and speeches. He found that it would not do to repeat himself often, seeing that there were a considerable number of people who were in the habit of following "the new man" to his appointments, in order to note how he acquitted himself at the outset of his ministry.

With all his love for Nature, and his appreciation of her moral and spiritual lessons, Arthur could not help feeling relieved when the necessity

for talking every time upon the same theme ceased, and he was free to bring his mind to bear on other subjects. Sometimes he had a "bad time" in these preliminary meetings, owing to their sameness. There were the same decorations, the same teas, the same jokes, the same enormous loaves of bread, with the same sales of fruit and vegetables at the end of the festival. The people, however, seemed never to weary of these affairs, for the harvest was to them the most practical expression of "Divine Providence," and they loved to hear their ministers drawing spiritual lessons from the natural phenomena so closely connected with their daily life.

As the autumn waned another series of services and meetings on behalf of Foreign Missions had to be undertaken, for Methodism, in town and country alike, moves "according to plan," and schedules dealing with every department of the work have to be filled up and signed by the superintendent in time for the important District Synod which is held early in the month of May.

Arthur greatly enjoyed his intercourse with the people in all parts of his circuit. He found that there was ample scope for all his powers. At St. Penza, the circuit chapel was a fine building, seating twelve hundred people, and it was often quite full on Sunday evenings. There was a splendid three-manual organ, and a well-trained choir, presided over by a Doctor of Music, and in the congregation were to be found men who had been all over the world in their capacity as mining

experts. The professions were well represented and the trades-folk in the town attended "Wesley" in large numbers. It was an inspiration to stand in the pulpit at St. Penza in the presence of such a goodly company, and to have the privilege of conducting such a well-ordered Service. As for the preaching, one needed to be well prepared before facing hearers trained to appreciate the best that the pulpit could give, but the toil of study was amply repaid by the tense attention which the people, "One and All," gave to those whom they felt to be faithfully ministering in sacred things.

After a strenuous Sunday at St. Penza, which often involved, in addition to two full preaching services, an address in the afternoon to the large "Brotherhood" connected with the Church, Arthur was glad enough to get back to his quiet lodgings at Trengwith, and his Mondays were generally spent in long rambles over the cliffs, or in quiet lanes and fields, where he found that healing balm which Nature holds in store for all who earnestly seek it.

A wide country circuit, such as the one to which Arthur Willesford had been appointed, is a fine training-ground. All told, the names on the rolls of membership in town and country numbered close on nine hundred. The pastoral supervision had to be close and business-like if discipline and efficiency were to be properly maintained. There were ten chapels for which services had to be provided, some of them quite small and situated in tiny hamlets dotting the country-side. Others again were of considerable size, and catered for

the religious life of the people in the more populous parts of the district. Most of the natives were engaged in agriculture, mining, or fishing. St. Penza itself, the head of the circuit, was a mining town, standing on a high wind-swept upland, and surrounded by moors which are studded here and there with gaunt mine-buildings, with their inevitable chimneys and heaps of "slag." The neighbourhood is certainly not at all attractive from the artist's point of view, but it has always been one of the chief centres of the tin-mining industry, with its various "by products." In spite of all sorts of fluctuations some of the mines in this part of Cornwall, which have been worked from time immemorial, are still rich in tin, and give employment to large numbers of men. Others again, are "knacked," their solitary stacks, gutted engine-houses, and dreary heaps of refuse, speaking pathetically of bold enterprises and speculative ventures long since abandoned.

Fortunately, St. Penza is not entirely dependent on its local labour, but is subsidized by the earnings of adventurous emigrants who are using their unrivalled knowledge of mining in "foreign parts," and who all look forward to "coming back home" when their pile is made, and to settling down in the old-world place where they were "barn and bred"; a region which, in spite of its somewhat harsh aspect in the eyes of strangers from "up-along," offers attractions to natives unsurpassed by those to be found in any other parts of the habitable globe. There is a Cornish Ballad which endeavours to give expression to "Cousin Jacky's love of his

County," a stanza or two may not be out of place just here :

THE SONG OF THE CORNISHMEN.

Down-along, down-along, down-along o' we !
There's a land of dear delight beside the Western Sea:
There you will in plenty find copper, fish, and tin,
Rest of heart and peace of mind, down with our Cornish kin.

Chorus :

Cornishmen, Cornishmen, round the world we go,
Cornishmen, Tre, Pol, and Pen, " Aw iss, tez zackly so ! "
When we've made our little pile, back again we'll come,
To the dear ones waitin' for us, in our Cornish home.

Oh, the joys that Cornwall holds, " Iss, we knaw them well."
Cornishmen—Tre, Pol, and Pen, only we can tell:
" Scrowlers," " pasties," " Tatie-caäke," " saffern buns," and " craim " :
Oh what wonder that we taäke such pride in Cornwall's name ?

There's no meadens like to ours, "Aw, the purty dears."
What a welcome we shall get, after all the years.
Hark! I hear the weddin' bells—Someone waits for me,
As the music sinks and swells across the Western Sea.

Cornishmen! Cornishmen! Let the song go round:
When we're comin' "up to grass," or workin' underground.
For the toast "ez zackly zaäme," wheresoe'er we be:
Cornishmen! Tre, Pol, and Pen, "Iss, they'm the chaps for me."

Of course the wide St. Penza Circuit could not have been effectively worked by the ministerial staff alone, but accredited Lay Helpers gave the extra help that was needed in supplying the pulpits, some of whom were men of remarkable mental and spiritual gifts. There were just one or two remaining "on the plan" of the earnest but untutored "Billy Bray" type, but these rarely officiated, and their quaint exegesis was becoming a thing of the past.

Although his preaching appointments in other parts of the circuit took him often away from home, Trengwith was Arthur's chief pastoral charge, with a few hamlets on that side of the circuit which he could easily reach with a cycle. In addition to his

circuit work the young minister had "meat to eat that his people wot not of," and as a probationer had to read fairly hard for his first year's examinations. In the Wesleyan Ministry a student generally leaves College at the end of his third year to enter the "active work," that is unless he is taking a special course of study requiring a longer sojourn in "the cloister's studious pale." The young probationer has to read books from a carefully compiled official list, he has certain prescribed portions of the Greek Testament, and the Hebrew Bible to get up for the examination which takes place in April, together with books on Church History, Ethics, Psychology and Homiletics, etc., which make a great demand upon his time and patience. For four years this regime must be followed, until the time for Ordination arrives, and the fully-fledged probationer, after passing all his academical and preaching tests, is entitled to a house and a wife if he is matrimonially inclined. At every District Synod, in the Pastoral Session, the time-honoured question is always asked, "Have the Preachers sufficient work?" Never yet has a Wesleyan probationer been known to complain of the lack of opportunities for the full exercise of his powers of mind and body, and the question is generally received, by the "younger brethren" especially, with a silence that is too deep for words.

However, Arthur was not going to make a bugbear of his probation-work; by using his time wisely he could easily cover the ground in the allotted period. Meanwhile he found increasing

interest in the opportunities which presented themselves of entering fully into the social and religious life of Trengwith. The young people had taken to him from the first. He realized that very thankfully, and they found him full of resource in their Devotional Services, Concerts, Socials, and Guild Meetings, which, on week-nights during the winter months formed an important and necessary part of the Church's programme.

CHAPTER IV

THE TRESILLIANS AND OTHERS

THE largest farmer in the neighbourhood was John Tresillian. Trengwith Barton was his own property, and the farm consisted of close upon six hundred acres of the best land in the district. Mr. Tresillian had received an education superior to that of most of the natives of Trengwith. He had been educated at a famous school in Somerset, and although he had never gone in for scholastic distinction his association with Tonedeane College had put a certain hall-mark upon him, and had given him a taste for sound literature. Farmers, as a rule, are not bookish men, but at Trengwith Barton there was a well-chosen library. History, Theology, Biography, and Science predominated on the book-shelves, whilst the older novelists and the outstanding poets were also represented in well-bound editions.

Arthur was delighted, when he visited the Barton for the first time, to find such evidences of refined literary taste, and his pleasure was increased when, on going into the roomy, wainscoted drawing-room, he saw a beautiful new Bechstein piano, which literally demanded to be played upon, there and then.

The young minister was a very fair pianist, and

Mr. and Mrs. Tresillian (no musicians themselves) enjoyed the few scraps which their visitor played from memory, informing him at the close of his little recital that the instrument had been bought as a surprise for their only daughter, who was just finishing her school career at Queenshurst, and who would shortly be returning home for good.

"Frances is very keen on music," said Mr. Tresillian. "She has often played at local concerts, and during the past two years she has made such progress under a first-class teacher that we thought she ought to have a really good instrument."

"Well, she ought to be delighted with this One," exclaimed Arthur, "and I hope to have the privilege of hearing her play sometimes."

"Certainly you shall," said Mrs. Tresillian. "Our ministers always make themselves at home here at the Barton, and I am sure that Frances will be interested to find that you take an interest in musical matters. You must not think," she added, "that our daughter is nothing but a 'drawing-room Miss,' she understands dairy-work, and loves house-work. I'm simply longing to have her here with me, and I am sure that she will be useful in the Church as well as in her home."

"Yes, she's a fine girl," said Mr. Tresillian, "but of course, mother, we're prejudiced, and we must not weary our visitor with our parental enthusiasms."

Arthur's first visit to the Barton caused him to reflect a good deal on the subject of social and home life as they presented themselves to him in the

circles amongst which he was accustomed to move. He had often been annoyed by the descriptions given by popular novelists of the commonplace vulgarity obtaining in families owing no allegiance to a National Church Order. Of course he knew that many of these disparaging pictures were the outcome of sheer ignorance or prejudice. It is so easy to caricature, but after all there is such a thing as literary conscientiousness—or at least there ought to be—and at any rate the young minister's experience had been that in many middle-class circles, and especially in religious circles, he had found the truest culture, and the most sensitive refinement, with few traces of that blatant Philistinism which many superficial writers see fit to attribute to those whose tastes and interests lie outside the sphere of a conventional social and religious caste.

Mr. Tresillian, for instance, Arthur reflected, was one of a type calculated to strengthen the moral and social life of a community in a marked degree. A keen man of business, but one who did not "sacrifice to his net, or burn incense to his drag"; scrupulously fair in all his dealings; a Justice of the Peace, and also a Lay Preacher and Trustee of Circuit property; above all a man with a broad intellectual outlook, and a deeply religious spirit. Arthur was proud to be associated with such a man in Church affairs: a total abstainer, but abounding in hospitality of the most substantial kind; his home-life, too, sweet and satisfying, his days commencing with prayers for which all the household assembled; a Liberal in Politics, but no violent

partisan, desiring only the good of Society as a whole.

Where is there room for prejudice here? thought Arthur. And, then, Mrs. Tresillian, not clever perhaps in any artistic or literary sense, but capable to a degree; a past mistress in domestic affairs, her influence wholesome and sweet, and her kindness of heart practically manifested in many a cottage home.

The daughter too—here it was only natural that Arthur should indulge in a little speculation as to what Frances would be like. He had never posed as a lady's man, his studies had absorbed him during his college course, but he was no celibate at heart, and the pulse of youth is bound to flutter now and again at the thought of possible romantic developments. It was a high privilege, he thought, to be admitted on terms of intimacy into such a family as this; and then the young minister's thoughts travelled into other homes where he had been treated as a welcome guest. The cottagers too, how delightful *they* were. What character-studies he had been able to make in the course of his pastoral visits. Not in all homes, of course, did he find the most desirable, intellectual and moral standards. Sometimes he had been pained by certain gross defections from the way of truth and right on the part of some of those with whose life he had become closely acquainted. But, on the whole, how lovable the people were, and how quaintly humorous when they got over their first shyness of a "foreigner," and let themselves go in artless conversation.

Arthur chuckled as he remembered some of his recent experiences with the humbler members of his flock. Last Friday, for instance, he had gone to see old Kitty Tresize.

"How are you, Kitty?" he had asked.

"Aw, my dear," she had answered, "I be waik in body, but strong in sperrit. I be waitin' to be 'took up.' The dear Lard do come very near, an' I do zim that I be close home to the Solestial City! Aw, my dear, I feel as if I cud take 'ee in my arms, an' fly straight up to glowry!"

"Well," Arthur had remarked, "perhaps, Kitty, I have a good deal of work to do down here yet."

"Maybe," was the response, "but I be ready to go, an' last night, as I lay here 'pon the baid, I seed a vision."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, my dear, down there by the baid-post I zeed a figger standin', an' I cud'n tell fust gwain off, whether 'twas a Pers-ality, or a Ra-ality, but I looked braäve an' stiddy, an' then I knawed 'twas the Zaviour, an' He had a ring o' vire all round His blessed head!"

Dear old Kitty, how he had enjoyed reading and praying with her.

And then there was his experience at Bojewyan Farm, where old Gramfer Nankivell lived with his bachelor son, William.

Arthur had gone into the kitchen, with its sanded floor, and rather comfortless aspect.

Gramfer Nankivell was bed-ridden and lay in an adjoining room, but his door was open, and he had

heard the conversation between William and the minister.

William had bought a harmonium, and was laboriously endeavouring in his spare time to learn how to play hymn tunes.

"You are fond of music?" Arthur had asked.

"Iss, I be," was the answer. "I be gwain to master all they toons in the 'Christian Choir' so soon's I've a-larnt all about they stops an' how to work the paddles vitty."

He set the book before his visitor and Arthur, selecting one of the liveliest of the tunes, began to play, to William's great delight.

All at once, however, a stick was heard thumping on the floor in Gramfer Nankivell's room.

William looked guilty, for his father, though decrepit, was a stern disciplinarian.

"What ez it, vaither?" he inquired nervously.

"Willyum, Willyum! That there moosic be too 'light,' bring the passon in here to wance an' lev us have a word o' prayer."

And so the musical studies were abruptly suspended, in deference to the old man's notions concerning the fitness of things.

Dear, homely folk, thought Arthur, how I love them in spite of their quaint perversities. What a chance a lover of dialect and folk-lore has here, and above all how good it is to know that the people are learning to love and to trust me, and to appreciate my efforts for their spiritual welfare.

So with his mind dwelling on these pastoral experiences, Arthur Willesford retired to rest, his dreams that night being evidently the outcome

of the reflections and reminiscences in which he had been indulging. The gates of Celestial Bliss, suggested by old Kitty's conversation, seemed to open for him in the most hospitable fashion, and certain other thoughts were responsible for the vision which came so vividly to his subconscious self, of the Angel Gabriel, in heavenly surroundings, performing the most exquisite music on a Bechstein grand piano.

CHAPTER V

THE VICAR CALLS

SHORTLY after his arrival in Trengwith, Arthur Willesford received a visit from the vicar. The Rev. Cyprian Russell proved to be a youngish man, but somewhat older than Arthur. Tall, thin, ascetic-looking, he was a typical "Parish Priest" in dress and appearance. He wore cassock and biretta, and had just come from Matins in the Parish Church. He introduced himself with a pleasant smile, and Arthur liked him at once, and instinctively felt that in spite of those differences in ritual and doctrine which must inevitably exist between them they would very likely have much in common intellectually, and that the personal friendship of this very pronounced "Anglo-Catholic" might be worth having.

Mr. Russell was an Oxford graduate who had developed into a clergyman of advanced sacerdotal views. Trengwith Church was the "highest" in the neighbourhood, and many letters had been written to the Editor of "The Cornubian," by "Protestant," "Indignant Parishioner," and "Old Fashioned Churchman," concerning the Vicar's "Popish Practices."

It must be said, however, that Russell was not quite so intolerant as many of his critics made him

out to be. It was true that he held strong views with regard to the Historic Episcopate, and that his mind harked back to what he considered to be the Church's Golden Age in ritual practice, and in national and social influence. By nature, however, he was intellectually honest, and he had conscientiously tried, since settling down in his country parish, to grasp the Nonconformist point of view with reference to the ideal of the "Catholic Church."

He appeared frankly glad to compare notes with a Free-Church Minister who was unmistakably a scholar and a gentleman.

"Would you like to smoke?" said Arthur.

The vicar happily had brought his pipe, and, establishing themselves in two big wicker chairs the two parsons settled down for their chat. Arthur soon discovered that his visitor was a particularly well-read man, and that it was likely that they might learn much from each other. The talk at first was general. Arthur told the vicar of the surprise his appointment to Trengwith had been to him, but that he was already feeling at home and hoped to do good work.

"You ought to have a very good time," said Mr. Russell. "Methodism is very strong in these parts, and although, as an Anglican, I deprecate the fact that so many of the people are alienated from the Church of England, yet I cannot but admire the faith and zeal displayed by those who carry on the work which John Wesley commenced when he first visited Cornwall in 1743.

"I am hoping, however," he continued with a

smile, " that you will all come back to the Mother Church some day."

" Ah," said Arthur, " you open up a big question. For my own part I have little taste for religious controversy; my interest in men and women is psychological rather than ecclesiastical. I can appreciate true devotion to high ecclesiastical ideals, even though my Nonconformist training requires me to reject some of the forms which many deem indispensable in giving those ideals expression."

" The symbolism of the Catholic Church," replied the vicar, glad of this opening for the ventilation of a subject very dear to him, " is the most perfect expression of Worship that Christians can possibly possess; it is the heritage of centuries, and to my mind the Christian Religion would be poor and barren if it were abolished ! "

" I do not know," returned Arthur, " that any liberal-minded Christian proposes to abolish symbolism—at least that part of it which really embodies deep spiritual truth."

" You seem broader-minded than some of your brethren," said Mr. Russell. " Your predecessor, Mr. Hopper, was a regular fire-brand, and often denounced what he was pleased to call my ' Romish Practices ' from the chapel pulpit. He was sincere, and a good man according to his lights, but he hadn't much historical perspective, and appeared to be quite untouched by the æsthetic and symbolic aspects of Religion. The people, *his* people—many of them, backed him too, and rather enjoyed his occasional diatribes against the dear old Church of England.

"I wonder why it is," mused the vicar, "that you Wesleyans" (he pronounced it Wezleyans) "are so prejudiced against those things which in my opinion are essential to true Catholic Worship?"

"We certainly do not give undue prominence to symbolic acts in our services," replied Willesford, "but it is not so much the ritual," he continued, "as the theological tenets embodied in your system of Church Polity, which fail to appeal to us."

"Will you kindly explain exactly what you mean?" asked the vicar.

"I mean," Arthur went on, "that the doctrine of the Historic Episcopate, for instance, with its assumption of sacramental exclusiveness, as held by clergymen of the school to which I believe you belong, seems to us misleading both historically and scripturally, for we cannot acquiesce in the judgment that would deny the position of Christian minister to a man who has received his Seal of Apostleship in some other Church than your own. I, for instance, am to be ordained to the Ministry of a Church which is the largest Protestant Communion in the world, but there are those holding so-called 'high' views of the Ministerial Office who would not hesitate to tell me that, in spite of my having received a distinct call to minister in sacred things, and in spite of years of special training for this work, I am still a 'layman.'"

The vicar did not commit himself to any expression of opinion on this point, but exclaimed:

"I should like to know, Mr. Willesford, what

you mean by the 'Seal of Apostleship?' We Anglo-Catholics claim that the Church of Christ is a Divine Society, and that the arrangement of its offices is a Divine arrangement, and that without Bishops, who have received the grace of Orders by regular succession from the Apostles, you can have no true sacraments. This, of course, is important, for sacraments are, by Divine Institution, necessary means of union with Christ, and are, therefore, the prescribed channels of salvation."

"But this is exactly where we disagree," said Arthur. "Your theory is simply that of 'No Bishop, no Salvation,' but does not your learned Bishop, Lightfoot, explode the fallacy of *ubi episcopos, ibi ecclesia*, in his masterly essay on the Christian Ministry? And then again, there is Archbishop Whately's deliberate dictum, to the effect that 'there is no Minister in Christendom who is able to trace his ecclesiastical pedigree with any degree of certainty.' John Wesley, too, said that, 'The Doctrine of Apostolic Succession is a fiction of the clerical brain.'"

The vicar seemed rather astonished by this fusilade of authorities, but gave no sign of irritability, and after a moment's pause Arthur went on to say that he was quite prepared to appreciate the good points in Anglican Churchmanship.

"I have dipped into Hooker," he remarked, "and have noted how a certain Polity may come, in the course of centuries, to be considered indispensable to Church Organization, but"—and here the young minister leaned eagerly forward—"do you really think, Mr. Russell, that the progress of

the Kingdom of God depends absolutely upon the details of ecclesiastical procedure?"

"No," replied the vicar with unexpected frankness, "I do not, and I fear that sometimes we are in danger of losing sight of the wide scope of the Gospel, and of becoming narrow in our outlook. The mediæval ideal of spiritual solidarity, attractive as it is to the ecclesiastico-antiquarian type of mind, is certainly deficient in some respects. I should say that the salvation of men and women, from evil habits and desires, is dependent upon a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ, an acceptance involving belief in His atoning work, and co-operation with Him in the extension of His Kingdom here on Earth."

"I agree with you most heartily," said Arthur, delighted with the vicar's outspokenness. "I am sure that a talk like this is calculated to remove many misconceptions, and to bring us on to common ground. Already between Anglicans and Free-Churchmen old prejudices are rapidly disappearing, and Christians of differing ecclesiastical ancestries are learning how to help one another.

"You have been very frank with me," Arthur continued, "and I will be frank also. Personally, I am quite prepared to recognize the charm, and indeed the value, of symbolism in Worship. Sometimes our services, in some places, seem bare, and too much is expected of the preacher. Religion *has* an æsthetic side, and this ought not to be neglected. But for my strict Nonconformist training I might easily have become an enthusiastic

Anglican, for my tastes really are mediæval where Worship is concerned. My principles, however, are Protestant, and I suppose it is right to follow one's principles rather than one's tastes. Still, it is not to be denied, at least by me, that even the spectacular aspects of Religion have their value, as well as their peculiar dangers."

"Yes," said Mr. Russell, "I know exactly where you are, or I *think* I do. Sir Thomas Browne is right when he insists that even rites and ceremonies that tend to degenerate into mere idolatries are not without deep spiritual significance to the really devout mind."

Taking a little leather-covered book from his pocket, the vicar read a sentence or two from the *Religio Medici:*

"Holy water and crucifix (dangerous to the common people) deceive not my judgment, nor abuse my devotion at all. I am, I confess, naturally inclined to that which misguided zeal terms superstition.

"At a Solemn Procession I have wept abundantly, whilst my consorts—blind with opposition and prejudice—have fallen into an excess of scorn and laughter.

"There are, questionless, both in Greek and Roman, and African churches, solemnities and ceremonies, whereof the wiser zeals do make a Christian use, and stand condemned by us, *not as evil in themselves*, but as allurements and baits of superstition to those vulgar heads that look asquint on the face of Truth."

The vicar slipped the book back into his pocket, while Arthur exclaimed :

" That just hits the mark. Ritual has its value, but it may be, and often is, unduly exploited, becoming a stumbling-block to weak minds; but rightly and reverently employed it helps to emphasize the 'Holiness of Beauty,' which is the necessary complement to the 'Beauty of Holiness.' "

" Well," said the vicar, as he rose to leave, " I am glad to have had this talk. I hope we shall see a good deal of each other. You will always be welcome at the Vicarage, for you are the first Nonconformist minister I ever talked with so freely. Mr. Hopper always kept me at arm's length, and perhaps I was stiff with *him*, remembering his publicly expressed opinions that my 'practices would lead to the rekindling of the fires of Smithfield.'

" It would be grand," he added, " if once again in England spiritual unity might be attained. Men of your type will do much to help us to a better state of things. At present the religious chaos is deplorable."

" The fault is by no means on one side," Arthur replied, " we 'Noncons' have often been bitter against the Church of England regarded as a State Establishment, and have not always been ready to recognize her grand influence on our National life. We have been jealous, not without reason, of your social prestige, but in a democratic age like ours readjustments may be nearer than we think."

The vicar made a wry face when Arthur referred to the democratic tendencies of the times.

"Ah, well," said he, "I suppose that Conservatism, ecclesiastical and political, is bred in my very bones. For you and I to see absolutely eye to eye is hardly to be expected. Still I am not the 'Jesuit' many in this Parish suppose me to be. We must try to help one another in leading men and women heavenwards, and I pray that God may make your coming amongst us a blessing to us all."

Arthur thanked Mr. Russell for his courtesy in calling, and after a hearty hand-shake the vicar donned his biretta and hurried home to lunch.

CHAPTER VI

ON THINGS IN GENERAL

THIS is a simple chronicle, and in recording it we have no desire to stimulate the jaded appetite of those whose reading, for the most part, is confined to "hot-house" fiction. Cocktails will never be drunk by our leading characters; they will manage to exist, and even be happy, without haunting *cabarets*, or eating expensive and indigestible dinners in smart restaurants to the barbaric din of jazz bands.

We shall not feel ourselves obliged to have recourse to the "eternal triangle" in order to ensure the interest of connoisseurs in domestic immoralities. Life, as reflected in these pages, will not be a continual feverish rush from one exciting function to another; indeed it will smack of tameness to those who cannot do without the artificial stimulants which the modern mind has been encouraged to desire, as constituting the crowning blessings of a highly developed civilization.

Even as a record of rural life, we fear that this will fall far short of the conventional standard which has been set up by writers accredited with a special genius for describing the comedy and drama of the country-side.

West-Country novelists, especially, have accustomed us to heroes of a decidedly sinister type, whose characters are entirely the result of environment. They live on lonely farms, amidst heather, furze and granite—typical of their own endurance, cruelty and strength; they are enormous consumers of liquor, and are constantly represented as galloping homewards across the moor, after their drunken orgies, to the accompaniment of thunder and lightning of unusual resonance and brilliance. These melodramatic heroes seldom have any use for religion. If they *are* represented as being religious they are "featured" as fanatics. Their theology is a grotesque parody of Biblical doctrines, and generally drives them mad. Usually the most religious among them are arrant hypocrites, using the "chapel" as a stalking-horse to their own fortunes, while the chapel itself is the centre of an orgiastic and illiterate religiosity such as can only be conceived of by an imagination as brilliant as it is ill-informed.

The womenfolk too, of these rural romances, are either frail and fond, or cautious and cruel, and love affairs generally have a tragic ending. It is really necessary to protest against the theatrical exaggerations which hinder multitudes of novel readers from seeing the life of the country-side in its true perspective.

We take it for granted that life *anywhere* is full of infinite possibilities, either for weal or for woe. Hopes and fears, affections and antipathies, joys and sorrows, aspirations and reverses, are experienced by us all, whether we live in cottages or

in palaces; but great excitements, stormy passions, fierce consuming lusts, are not the staple elements of everyday existence, and to depend entirely on these for literary interest argues a lack of artistic ability in delineating life in its normal unhysteric aspects.

Life in a country village has its occasional dramatic upheavals, its scandals, intrigues, dissipations, and domestic crises, but as a rule things go on in fairly tranquil fashion, and "sensation" plays a very small part in its daily and monthly programme. There is, however, plenty of material for those who are content to "reap the harvest of a quiet eye," in the comings and goings, sayings and doings, of those whose lot is cast "far from the madding crowd"; and if one is content to be interested, for a while at least, in homely unexciting happenings, such an attitude of mind will bring its own reward. At any rate in these chapters we simply aim at giving as accurately as memory permits a fairly truthful description of certain phases of social and religious life, together with certain traits of rural character, as they are known to those whose fortune it has been to live for a while in close touch with the unsophisticated folk of a typical West-Country village.

2

Trengwith Church-Town may seem to the casual visitor to be lacking in the elements which make for intellectual excitement, but those who know

the place well think very differently. The Parish Church stands in the centre of the village, and is one of the most interesting ecclesiastical structures in Western Cornwall, its foundation dating from the fourteenth century. During the summer months large numbers of tourists pass through Trengwith on their way to view the magnificent coast scenery for which the district is so noted, and it is regarded as quite the correct thing to "do" the church before proceeding to the gorse-crowned, boulder-strewn cliffs, which lie a mile or two beyond the village.

Old Mary Ann Trevarthen, the ancient caretaker, a shrewd, clever old dame, in spite of her quaint appearance, is quite in harmony with her surroundings, and is supposed by envious neighbours to make "a pretty penny" out of the visitors during the season.

Mary Ann has managed somehow to construct a most ingenious narrative dealing with the history of the church from the earliest times, with, of course, special reference to Puritanical irreverence, as evidenced by certain mutilated effigies in different parts of the building. Being naturally of a loquacious turn, Mary Ann often allows her imagination to play in rather a fantastic fashion around the few basal antiquarian and historical facts which she has managed to get hold of; but the visitors, as a rule, are not hyper-critical, and are quite delighted with the quaint aspect and dialect of their guide as they are with the church itself, and usually reward Mary Ann's curious jumble of ecclesiology with substantial donations.

Sometimes Nonconformist strangers from "up the country" attempt to draw the old lady with reference to present-day spiritual happenings in Trengwith Parish Church, but they seldom succeed in obtaining any information which might lead them to suppose that the ancient edifice is to be regarded—from their point of view—as the evangelistic "dynamo" of the parish.

"Have you had any conversions here lately?" asked a brisk, up-to-date visitor of strong revivalistic tendencies, fresh from his crowded chapel in the Midlands, where a successful Mission had just been held.

Mary Ann appeared to be quite shocked at the ignorance displayed by her interlocutor, and hastened to assure him that the church was not, nor ever had been, regarded as a revival centre.

"Convarsions? Law bless 'ee, sir, we don't belong to have no convarsions '*ere*. We do go to Church for christenins, an' marryins, an' berrins, but for praichin' an' anything for the *nex*' world the folk do belong to go to Chapel!"

Mary Ann's shrewdness in looking after the "main chance" is evidenced by the following incident.

One day, as a party of ladies and gentlemen were leaving the building after a tour of inspection, one of the visitors presented their guide with a two-shilling piece in recognition of her services. The coin accidentally fell to the ground, and after rolling a little way, slipped down an open grating in the aisle, and was lost to view.

Mary Ann's grief was pitiable in the extreme.

"Aw, dear, dear, dear! Aw, what a pity, *what* a pity!"

"Never mind," said a benevolent old gentleman, touched by the old dame's disappointment. "Here is another two-shilling piece for you."

Mary Ann dropped a profound curtsy, at the same time calling down Heaven's richest blessing upon the generous giver, but when the party had left the church she turned to a crony who had witnessed the transaction and, pointing to the grating which had swallowed up the first coin, exclaimed with a gleeful chuckle:

"I knaw'd I cud git *he* again when the folks was gone."

This authentic anecdote obliges us sadly to admit that the higher ethics are not cultivated to excess by Mary Ann, and indeed truth compels us to state, notwithstanding our previous reference to the nonprevalence of the cocktail habit in Trengwith, that the old caretaker is sometimes apt to depart from that condition of strict sobriety which one would consider to be in keeping with her office.

One day the vicar ventured to tackle her upon this delicate question.

"Mary Ann, I have heard that you sometimes take a little more than is good for you. I should advise you in future, especially when visitors are about, to have as little to do with the brandy-bottle as possible."

"Brandy-bottle," exclaimed the old lady indignantly, "I niver kips no such thing in th'ouse."

"Oh, well," replied the vicar, "you need not

prevaricate, whisky or gin are quite as capable of rendering you unfit for your duties, and I hope that for the future you will avoid these dangerous beverages."

"I niver touches no whisky, nor gin neither," was Mary Ann's sharp rejoinder.

And the vicar, thinking that perhaps he had been misinformed, forebore to go any further into the matter. He would, however, have been edified if he could have heard the "suspect" rehearsing the incident to her bosom friend, Tamsin Richards, and saying with a cunning twinkle in her eye :

"I *niver* told th' passon that, if there is one thing I do dearly like better than another *'tis a little drop o' rum!*"

It would appear from this that a capacity for dry, antiquarian details is by no means incompatible with a taste for something of a more pungent and exhilarating character !

CHAPTER VII

FRESH INTERESTS

A FORTNIGHT before Christmas, Frances Tresillian returned home from school, and life at the Barton was all the brighter in consequence. Her greatest school-friend, Nancy Mitchell, had accepted an invitation to spend Christmas at Trengwith. Nancy's people were Cornish, they lived at Hampstead, and Nancy was delighted to have this chance of visiting her parents' native County for the first time.

The advent of the two girls was calculated to bring "a certain liveliness" into the social life of the village, and it was wonderful to note how soon their presence in the neighbourhood was discovered by other young people of both sexes who, like themselves, were free to give a good deal of time to holiday pursuits.

An exciting hockey match on the towans was witnessed by all the villagers who were able to attend. The Vicar and Arthur Willesford were among the spectators, and forgot all controversy in their mutual absorption in the vicissitudes of the game.

It was at the close of this match that Mr. Tresillian introduced Arthur to Frances and Nancy.

The girls were flushed with victory, and looked very charming in their short-skirted sports-dress, set off by their monogrammed school caps.

Arthur, of course, was ready with hearty congratulations on the excellence of their play, and this introduction proved to be the prelude to various social engagements which afforded the young minister just the kind of relaxation for which he was beginning to feel the need, and which would prevent him from being too one-sided in his interests.

"We want your help please, Mr. Willesford," said Frances. "We have asked the vicar to lend us the Parish Hall for an 'Old Cornwall Concert' on the evening of Twelfth Night. He has kindly consented, and as I hear that you are keen on music and are interested in our Cornish dialect and customs, we should be grateful if you would help us in carrying our plans through."

"I shall only be too glad," Arthur replied. "Something of this kind will do us all a lot of good. I have only been here a few months as you know, and I like the place and the people immensely, but there *is* a danger of getting into hum-drum ways. Your proposal is calculated to shift us out of our usual groove, and will give us something fresh to think about."

"Our idea is simple enough," said Frances. "The villagers always look forward to a special entertainment at this time of the year, and we want our programme to be as *Cornish* as we can make it.

"Several of us," she continued, "belong to the

'Old Cornwall Society'; it has only been in existence a year or two, but already it has a fairly large membership, and it is likely to prove a valuable means of stimulating enthusiasm for Art, Literature, Music, and Folk-lore, as these are bound up with the romantic Past of our native County."

"What form will the concert take?" Arthur inquired.

"Oh, we shall have plenty of variety," Frances explained. "Father has written to a friend of his at St. Ina, Mr. Norton French, who is an authority on ancient Cornish matters. In addition to being an expert on our old language he has been reviving some of the quaint Mummers' Plays which were once so popular in the West of England, and a little company of local actors will perform one of these.

"The Play, 'Lady Lovell's Courtship,' will take up the second half of the evening, the first part of the programme *we* are expected to provide with whatever talent is available, but as far as possible the real 'Cornish' note is to be sounded throughout."

"It all sounds most interesting," said Arthur, "and although I am not a Cornishman by birth I certainly intend to be one by adoption, for the longer I stay in the County the more fascinated I become. There is more to learn than I ever dreamed of when I first turned my attention to antiquarian matters, and I am glad to know that there is a society formed which aims at preserving the chief features of Cornish speech and custom.

"You will find me an apt pupil," he added,

" and this ' Old Cornwall ' evening will do me and everybody else a world of good."

So the compact was made, all details of the miscellaneous first part of the concert being postponed for later careful consideration. The vicar had already promised his help, and this was valuable, as he was a keen student of Celtic lore, and realized the importance of Folk-study as a means of stimulating imagination and of preserving what is intellectually and historically precious in things pertaining to the County.

Mr. Russell's library was fairly well stocked with Cornish books, and these he placed at Arthur Willesford's disposal, being pleased to note the young minister's growing interest in Cornish matters.

In Robert Hunt's *Romances and Drolls of the West of England*, Arthur found much entertainment. He dipped into old " Passon Polwhele's " *History of Cornwall*, and Dr. Jago's *Cornish Dictionary* ; enjoyed thoroughly Tregellas' *Cornish Worthies*, and found Jenner's *Handbook of the Cornish Language* full of philological interest.

Whilst feeling rather dubious as to the avowed ambition of certain enthusiasts to revive the Cornish language, he quite saw the value of the attempts which were being made to classify and elucidate the old " place-names " which have such a strange sound in the ears of visitors from " up-along." He had had opportunities of noting for himself how some of the ancient Celtic superstitions still lingered, in spite of the Council Schools and other levelling agencies. The poems of Robert Stephen

Hawker, the Poet-Priest of Morwenstowe, he had found very fascinating, permeated as they are with the spirit of legend and romance which broods over this rugged Western peninsula. Now that Cornwall has become so popular as a tourist-resort, the modernization of the County, especially in the towns, proceeds apace, but, granting this, the fact remains that this remote part of Britain, which was isolated from the main stream of political events for centuries, will continue for some considerable time, to give evidence of possessing racial traits which clearly distinguish the Celtic character from that of the mixed populations dwelling beyond the Tamar.

2

Christmas Day at Trengwith passed very peacefully and happily. There were services in the morning at Church and Chapel. Arthur had a good congregation and preached a short sermon on "The Wisdom of God in a Mystery." The whole service was concluded within the hour, for no preacher with a sense of the fitness of things would think of keeping his audience—old and young—from the home festivities which awaited them.

Arthur had been invited to spend the day at the Barton, and was delighted to accept. He had no further clerical duties to perform that day, and therefore was quite ready to enter into the happy home life of a family whose friendship he valued

so highly. It goes without saying that Mrs. Tresillian's dinner was thoroughly "Christmassy" and cooked to perfection. Frances and Nancy were very lively during the meal, but at its close they vanished for a time. Mrs. Tresillian retired to her room for a well-earned rest, and Mr. Tresillian, after installing Arthur in the library, went out to see his cattle before darkness came on.

The evening proved full of variety. Several visitors dropped in, hoping to hear some good music. Nancy was a really sound violinist, and had brought her violin to Cornwall. She and Frances gave their listeners a delightful recital for nearly an hour, and then a maid came with the announcement that the Christmas Mummers had arrived and were quite ready to give their performance in the kitchen. This was the play of "St. George," a hardy annual where Trengwith was concerned. Mr. Tresillian liked to keep up the old customs, and the young men and boys enjoyed the rough-and-tumble fun which this time-honoured Masque involved.

To Jack Penhaligon, a strapping young carter, was allotted the part of "St. George"; Dick Hockin was "Father Christmas"; Archie Cock, "The Doctor"; Harry Buzza, "A Lady." Other actors were: Sam Cholwell, Frank Polkinghorne, Walter Trembath, Isaac Richards, and Tom Polwhele, who had all provided themselves with comic or grotesque costumes suitable to the drama. The great kitchen was an ideal place for the performance of the Masque. A generous fire of logs blazed in the open hearth: the maids, Hannah and

Bessie, had decorated their domain with evergreens and festoons of coloured paper, whilst a few large Chinese lanterns completed the stage effect.

The party from the drawing-room having taken the seats arranged for them, and the rest of the audience being somehow accommodated, the fun began.

We cannot attempt a detailed description of the Play, but you can imagine Jack Penhaligon appearing from behind a screen, clad in a leather jerkin, with a shining dish-cover for a helmet, his moustaches and rouged cheeks being full worthy of the champion Saint of England. He carried an old cutlass which years ago had been found in an abandoned smuggler's cave, and which always did duty in the Christmas Masque.

Father Christmas followed him with a seasonable oration, and the Turkish Knight (Sam Cholwell) then challenged St. George to mortal combat.

St. George is nothing loth, and after a grandiose account of his career, which had eventually brought him "Fair Sabra, the King of Egypt's daughter," for a bride, there is a furious passage of arms between the two.

The Turkish Knight, to the delight of all is "knacked out." The Doctor with his magic bottle of "Elicumpane" fails to revive him, whereupon the "Hobby-horse," gaily caparisoned, and extremely frisky, capers in with various grotesquely attired attendants, and after a good deal of amusing by-play the body of the Turk is removed, and the stage is once more clear.

The " Old Squire " then appears, and announces his claims to respect, but his speech is cut short by the arrival of " Hub-Bub," a nondescript of weird aspect, who appears to have no respect whatever for the representative of the " Landed Gentry." He carries a club in one hand, a frying-pan in the other, and he and the " Old Squire " have a set-to by way of burlesqueing the combat between St. George and The Saracen. " Hub-Bub " gets it badly " in the neck," and the Squire celebrates his victory in good sound British fashion:—

" I've fought 'ee fair, an' there you must lie,
You never ought to have tackled I:
Of gurt Landowners I be chief,
An' I feeds on the finest o' mutton an' beef:
A poor wisht objick sure you be,
Such himperence I never did zee."

After these encounters other characters appear, including the King and Queen of Egypt. The screen is removed, and the whole company is seen *en tableau*. Further dialogues, interspersed with archaic ballads, are forthcoming, and the entertainment concludes with a good-humoured mix-up of actors and audience, after which the former, in a very thirsty and perspiring state, are left in possession of the kitchen, where the maids dispense refreshment under the direction of their Master and Mistress, whilst the rest of the house-party find their way back to the drawing-room again.

3

"Well, Mr. Willesford, how did you enjoy the performance?" Frances inquired.

He had managed to slip into a chair next to her, and was very glad to have an opportunity of exchanging ideas with such an attractive representative of Old Cornwall.

Please make no mistake, my dear readers, and jump to the conclusion that Arthur had fallen head over ears in love with Frances, and that he was seizing the first real opportunity of laying siege to her affections. Nothing was farther from his thoughts. He was not of the clerical "lady-killer" type, but he could not help feeling very happy in the enjoyment of such a delightful Yuletide, and as for Frances, she was certainly not one of those girls to whom flirtation constitutes the *raison d'etre* of social life. She could, as Arthur had already discovered, converse with sense and animation, without that note of sex-challenge which, in certain circles, according to many of our modern society novelists, must inevitably reveal itself in the very earliest stages of a man and a maid's acquaintance.

Frances had been educated at a school where the ideal kept in view was that of the English Gentlewoman in the best sense of the term. There was no attempt to encourage intellectual or social "smartness," in fact, judged by certain popular standards, the school where she had spent five happy and profitable years was "old-fashioned," even Victorian in some of its ideals. The

superiority of principle to mere intellectual brilliance was constantly emphasized by the Principal and her staff, with the result that their pupils, in addition to receiving a good all-round training in general knowledge, learnt to look at the main facts of life in a comprehensive, common sense way. If a girl had marked musical, literary, or artistic gifts, she was encouraged to specialize along her own lines, but never with a view to the mere spectacular display of talent, or for the winning of distinction simply for distinction's sake.

On the athletic side the school was strong, but even here there was wise restraint, mental and spiritual interests always claiming chief attention.

The girls were taught to regard religion, not as a merely conventional matter, but as the dominating principle of life. They were kept in touch with present-day happenings and developments in politics and science, and were encouraged to take a broad outlook on general world-affairs.

The inevitable result of this wise curriculum was, that to most of the girls came a strong desire to undertake some form of social service when the opportunity should arrive. They learnt to esteem a life of definite usefulness as being more desirable than one devoted to vain ambition and restless pleasure-seeking. They were also encouraged to talk rationally, and to avoid that excessive use of superfluous adjectives which, in modern conversation, are so hardly worked when mental inefficiency has to be camouflaged with slang expressions.

It is not to be concluded that Frances' school-discipline had moulded her into a kind of female

"Admirable Crichton"—nothing of the sort. She was just what a normal, really well-educated girl should be when home and school influences have been used in the sanest way.

One need not be in love with a girl to acknowledge her personal beauty, and Arthur Willesford, being no anchorite, saw no reason for not admiring her, for she *was* pretty in the typical dark, Celtic style, with beautiful clear cut features, and big luminous brown eyes. Her pretty evening frock of rose taffeta suited her well, and as she chatted to Arthur he realized what a pleasure it was to talk to a girl to whom a tête-à-tête with a person of the opposite sex brought no sense of feminine embarrassment.

"I am enjoying it all thoroughly," Arthur replied in answer to her query. "Much of what I am experiencing here at Trengwith is quite new to me. I seem to be plunged into a veritable world of romance, and I find it delightful."

"These old Christmas Plays," said Frances, "are well worth keeping up. Of course the acting is crude enough, but the genuine fun and sense of social comradeship more than make up for the absence of artificial refinements."

"I quite agree," said Arthur, "the keeping up of these quaint village customs is calculated to promote the innocent gaiety of the community, especially at a time of the year likely to prove somewhat dull in their absence."

"We Cornish," Frances remarked, "love our homeland intensely. We always feel restless when we are away from it. There is a mystic force that

holds us loyal to the immemorial Past, and it seems to grow stronger with the passing of the years.

"I have enjoyed my school life very much," she continued, "but I can't tell you how glad I am to be home again, there is so much here to enjoy and to do."

Together they discussed many topics of mutual interest, books, music, and so forth. Presently Mr. and Mrs. Tresillian returned from the kitchen, the Mummers having departed, well pleased with the hospitality they had received. The vicar now put in an appearance with his 'cello, on which he was a fair performer, and Frances, Nancy and he, commenced to play certain trios intended to be given as musical extras in the programme of the forthcoming "Old Cornwall" concert.

Whilst the music was going on, Mr. Tresillian and Arthur had two games of chess. They were both keen players and managed to finish with even honours. Nine o'clock supper followed, Mr. Tresillian proving to be in his best story-telling vein, and keeping the company in a constant state of merriment with his inimitable command of dialect and knowledge of rustic idiosyncrasies.

Arthur was indeed sorry when the time came to say "good-night." It had been an ideal Christmas Day for him, filled with delightful pleasures, and the very best of social comradeship, and as he sat in his quiet room, enjoying a final pipe before retiring to rest, he felt more thankful than ever that "The pretty ways of Providence" had guided him to Trengwith.

CHAPTER VIII

STOCKTAKING

ARTHUR WILLESFORD was not one to be easily diverted from the main purpose of his life by social distractions however congenial these might be. So far we have been chiefly concerned with the external aspects of his settlement in Trengwith, but it may be well at this stage of our chronicle to try to explain the nature of the principles and motives which had brought him hither. The close of the year is, with most thoughtful people a time of spiritual stocktaking, and, as Arthur prepared for the Watch-night Service, which was to be held on the last night of December, he realized the need for, and value of, introspection, in order that his own attitude towards life and religion might be clearly defined.

To review one's personal mental and spiritual life, and to outline, however roughly, one's future course of action, is never an easy task. So many elements and experiences go to the make-up and development of the individual *ego* that a person at any given point in his life-history, may well feel puzzled to know precisely where he stands, and what he seeks to accomplish.

Arthur's Methodist training, however, had

helped to make this process of self-examination easier than it would have been to one unaccustomed to habits of reflection, and his position as a religious leader made it all the more necessary that he should, from time to time, assure himself that he was in his rightful place, and that all he was doing, or proposed to do, was really well worth while.

Arthur Willesford's presence in Trengwith was simply the outcome of a series of determining causes which, almost inevitably, had led him into the ministry of that Church in which he had received his earliest religious impressions.

He knew very well that his whole life would not be spent in ministering to a village constituency, but if he failed to win his spurs in his first few circuits there would be little chance for a career of widely extended influence later on. At any time, in the next year or two, he might be transferred to a great Mission Centre, or to an important town church, and therefore, though living in such a remote locality, it behoved him to keep intellectually alive, and to read, as accurately as he could, "the signs of the times," so that when the time came for him to adapt himself to absolutely new conditions he might not be disconcerted.

But what *was* it that he and others in his position were aiming to accomplish? To explain in a few words is indeed difficult, seeing that young Free Churchmen know nothing about the process of "taking Orders" in a mere professional sense, or of giving their lives to the discharge of more or less perfunctory clerical duties.

From a purely worldly point of view Arthur's

prospects would appear to be the reverse of brilliant. His stipend would always be a modest one, and although as a married man a furnished manse free of rates and taxes would be provided, with certain extra allowances for education, should children appear on the scene, there would never be much of a margin for luxuries, save that provided for by any private means he might happen to possess.

Already some of his old school fellows were making good in professional and business life, and some of them, as Arthur knew, considered his choice of a ministerial career quite quixotic, seeing that with his great mental abilities, and with his good home-backing, he might have won through to some great financial or social success.

But Arthur's tastes were simple ; the world of business, with its sharp relentless competition, and often heartless spirit, had no attraction for him. His love of books, and of Nature, would receive scant encouragement in the hustling arena of commerce, and as for wealth, he had no craving for it. In his father's house he had been accustomed to modest comfort and refinement, and his means would always be sufficient—barring accidents —to enable him to live in much the same style.

His resolve to enter the ministry, however, was not caused merely by a distaste for other more secular professions. He had been conscious of receiving a distinct " call " to deliver a heartening and saving message to a world which he clearly realized was morally disordered. He had come to believe, most sincerely, that the Christian

evangel, really understood and practically incorporated into individual and social life, contained the one and only solution for the age-long enigmas of humanity. He was, therefore, content to begin at the small end of the problem. Men's hearts, he reflected, are the same in town or in country. No matter what social movements or scientific discoveries might affect the external conditions of life, the essential spiritual needs of humanity would be ever the same. Wherever he might be stationed *there* would be the centre of the universe for him, and there would be found some whose hearts and minds would most certainly respond to a real "Gospel," clearly presented, and faithfully exemplified in the life and character of its proclaimer. Even those who through passion, prejudice, or indifference, might remain apparently unaffected, were bound in some way or other (so subtly does the Spirit of Truth work) to be influenced by those principles and ideals which conscience must of necessity approve, however expediency or sensuality might vote for their rejection.

2

And this "Gospel"—what *was* it?

A long theological explanation would be tedious, but it may be taken for granted that the presence of the young probationer at Trengwith was not to be regarded as the outcome of mere "sentimentalism," but, as we have already stated, was

rather the result of a series of determining causes, which, from early boyhood and onward, had irresistibly influenced his habits and thoughts, and had given him the motive-power which he was bringing to bear on the tasks which confronted him.

First of all there was his home-life which had been of the most desirable kind for influencing and forming his character.

His father's house had always been a centre of generous hospitality, and especially welcome guests were the ministers who came to preach and speak in the town chapel in connection with special denominational events.

From Presidents of the Conference and Doctors of Divinity, down to nervous young probationers, they all came and were delighted with the charm and comfort of this typical Methodist home.

Arthur's education, like that of other lads of his type, had been of a sound middle-class order. First a day-school, where the Principal, Mr. Wingate, though without an academical degree was a born teacher, and a man of exceptionally wide reading, who recked nought of "codes" and "standards" could he but get his pupils to think for themselves. From him Arthur had learnt more than he realized at the time. Then came the town Grammar School, a very ancient foundation with decidedly antique scholastic methods. The "Head," the Rev. Edward Spender, had very conservative notions respecting a "classical" education, and if Arthur had not been pretty well grounded by his first teacher in ordinary elementary subjects the Grammar School, apart from making him fairly

familiar with "Cæsar" and "Virgil" would not have done very much for him.

After this had come two years at one of the Methodist Public Schools.

"Tonedeane," was selected by his father on account of the healthy situation of the fine school premises (the College being built in the architectural style of Wadham College, Oxford) and the acknowledged high moral tone inculcated by the Head-master, Dr. Stribly, who was by way of being a sort of "Dr. Arnold" in his views of life, and in his school methods.

At school Arthur had had the usual experiences which are inevitable when boys from all sorts of homes are thrown together. His knowledge of good and evil had been naturally increased. He had had his serious escapades, like the rest of his school-mates, but a keen love of athletics had saved him from many of the meaner vices, and he had been proud of representing the School on the cricket and football fields in some of its important matches.

After all, who can really fathom the mysterious inner life of a growing lad?

His strange moods of goodness and their opposites; his inherent sense of justice (often shocked by adverse happenings in town and school-life); his tendency to hero-worship; his dislike of pietism; his love of adventure and romance—fed by literature deeply tinged with piratical lawlessness; the vague longings, due to adolescence (too often unexplained by those responsible for proper guidance) and sometimes working out disastrously in the channels of perverted passion; the depres-

sions caused by the violations of conscience; the aspirations after better things produced by the swinging back of the mind into a normal healthy state!

Looking back over his school days Arthur could not remember anything resembling a "plaster-saint" (or indeed, any other kind of saint) in his own mental and moral make-up. His attitude towards religion had been diffident and undecided as it is apt to be with most boys until the tremendous facts of life are seen in their true and startling aspects. Without considering himself (in the language of the older theologians) "a child of wrath," he was not specially conscious of a great desire for celestial happiness. He just wanted to be let alone, and to live a life as happily irresponsible as possible.

It was during his last term at "Tonedeane" that Arthur had been led to see the necessity for decision in the matter of religious faith. This was the result of certain conversations with his House-master, Mr. James, a Cambridge graduate, and notable athlete, who took a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of the boys in his charge, and who was not ashamed to own that he regarded such work as being of pre-eminent importance in its bearing on the whole of their future careers.

Mr. James' convincing way of putting the claims of Christ and His Church in such terms as were calculated to appeal to a thoughtful boy's imagination and heart, caused Arthur to be conscious of the need of some kind of personal testimony as a professed Christian, for, up to this time,

in spite of all home and church influences, he had made nothing in the nature of a public profession. Faced by this condemnatory fact he had felt constrained to stay behind one Sunday evening in the college chapel, with several other boys who were making their "first communion."

He had been conscious of no great religious upheaval, but it seemed right to him that he should take this step, and, having done so, he had begun to think more about the Christian Faith, with its obligations and opportunities for those who professed it.

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CHAPTER IX

A MINISTER IN THE MAKING

FOR some considerable time after leaving school Arthur had had no thoughts whatever of entering the ministry. His father, a successful business man, expected that his eldest son would follow in his steps, but somehow or other Arthur did not feel that he had found his right line of life. His love of Nature and of literature—of meditative pursuits generally—seemed to lead in another direction. The preaching he had listened to in the town chapel was not of a specially brilliant order. Most of the men appointed to his home-circuit were elderly, and though able in their quiet way, and doctrinally sound (so he was given to understand by those who were supposed to know), they possessed little of that magnetic quality which was calculated to appeal irresistibly to young developing minds. But when old Mr. Leggitt, who specialized in "Methodist Polity," and whose sermons were compendiums of the theology he had studied (apparently with finality) forty years back, was laid aside by an illness for some months, his place had been supplied by the Rev. Athelstan Gray, a young ordinand of exceptional intellectual ability and attractive personality, whose fresh way of presenting the cardinal tenets of religion had

opened Arthur's eyes to the undreamed-of romanticism of the Gospel History, and to the far-reaching issues—personal, intellectual, social, national and international, which its right understanding and practical application involved.

Mr. Gray was a frequent visitor to Arthur's home, and in his many walks and talks with this gifted young minister, Arthur came to learn how all that was of highest value in Literature, Art, Science, Philosophy, and History, was bound to find its fullest and finest expression in Christian thought and practice. This discovery had given a new direction to his choice of books, and under Mr. Gray's direction he had begun to read on sound lines, and had tackled several of the world's classics, which might possibly have not come his way but for the solicitude of his mental guide.

It had become increasingly evident to his parents and friends that his love of studious pursuits seemed to indicate the desirability of a new outlet for his energies, but as yet Arthur had not been conscious of anything in the nature of a "call" to exchange a secular for a purely spiritual occupation. But at last it had come, not as it does sometimes in a dramatic soul-shattering way, or as the outcome of a deep surge of religious emotionalism, but through the challenge of an immediate duty.

He had heard the "Call of the Church." It was felt by many that if he were given a suitable opportunity he could use to advantage, and for the Church's benefit, such gifts and graces of mind and heart as he possessed. And so Arthur had "begun to preach," his first service and sermon

being conducted and delivered at Heatherfield, a small hamlet, possessing a chapel, four miles from the Circuit Town, an old lady informing him at the end of his effort that "he had opened up the text in a very 'andsome manner!"

The first attempt at public speech had been a revelation to him, first of his own shortcomings, and then of the possibilities awaiting him could he but learn to marshal his thoughts effectively. Still, this beginning had opened up the way for further attempts, and by degrees he had become accustomed to the sound of his own voice, and had begun to take increasing delight in arranging his sermon-matter in workmanlike style.

Soon there had come many requests for his services, and on one memorable Sunday he had found himself standing in the pulpit of the Circuit Chapel, faced by those who had known him from boyhood. That had been an ordeal indeed, but he had come successfully through it, and, without being unduly elated by the encouragement his early ventures had received from his many friends, he had become conscious of a great desire to prove more worthy of the confidence that was being reposed in him. He had found, too, that his pulpit preparation was a fine means of clarifying his own mind. Up to now he had accepted certain ideas and dogmas as being the outcome of tradition or ecclesiastical authority, but he had found that in preparing to speak publicly it was necessary to "face up" to cardinal doctrines and historical arguments in a much more resolute and intelligent manner.

Were the foundations of his creed really sound?

Was the Gospel History true? Was the Christian ethic clearly understood and interpreted into action the one and only solution for the age-long problems of humanity? If the answer to these questions was in the affirmative—and he thought it was—then there could certainly be no higher calling than that of helping to make the message of hope and healing plain, so that all classes of people might realize its mystic beauty and experience its transforming power.

And so the way had opened up. Under Mr. Gray's direction he had prepared for the literary and theological examinations prescribed for ministerial candidates, and prior to the examination in the District Synod, three ministers had heard him preach in a big town church. He certainly had not been so unwise in choosing his text as one candidate he had heard of who, to the amazement of his hearers, and especially of the three clerical critics, had announced the challenging statement, "*One of you is a Devil!*"

Arthur had received good marks for his preached and written sermons, and after a searching *viva voce* examination, conducted by a Doctor of Divinity (whose bark proved worse than his bite), in the Pastoral Session of the Synod, he had found himself "accepted for the Ministry."

2

Then had followed his College life. Already those crowded days of work and recreation seemed

like a dream! Arthur had done well in his classes, and as he had matriculated at "Tonedeane" he had been able to take his Bachelor of Arts degree at London University. At College he had found many types represented. Some of his fellow students had had few early advantages, but many of these were young men of sterling character and of marked preaching ability.

Methodism has always had an eye for preachers, and the born preacher is generally alive to the need for culture. It had been astonishing to note how men of this class got down to their work, tackling the elements of Greek and Hebrew, and making their first acquaintance with really critical theological problems. Other students there were who had had a good start in public school or university. The Tutors were all picked men, holding first-class degrees, and appointed to their work on account of their Christian character and high intellectual attainments.

Often Arthur, in his quiet room at Trengwith, had found himself thinking of those fast-receding days. Of nasty "snags" in the Hebrew Class, when Dr. Dawson had been specially sarcastic (owing, it was piously supposed to his sciatica); of tennis, football and cricket achievements; of week-end preaching appointments; of college meetings for the airing of grievances, or for pure unmitigated fun; of happy vacations, and of moving "valedictories"—when the call came to individuals or to groups to quit the "Cloister's studious pale," and enter the arena where Life's real battle awaited them.

3

Such were the influences and experiences which had led Arthur Willesford to his present position as a first-year's probationer in a quiet Cornish village, and as he cast his mind back over the years of aspiration and preparation, he felt no regrets, but rather was conscious of a great feeling of thankfulness that things had turned out for him as they had done.

During his College course his views had naturally broadened on various matters concerning which he had been wont to hold purely conventional opinions. The critical-philological methods which had characterized many of the class-room studies; the need there inculcated for satisfactory definitions, and sound logic in the conduct of an argument; the world-wide panorama of human history—and especially of Comparative Religion and Church History—which the works of great scholars had unfolded; the wonderful insight into human characters, passions, and motives possessed by the world's foremost poets, moralists, essayists, and novelists; the marvels of the physical universe as expounded by scientists of the first order; all these modifying, informing, widening, deepening, and mentally quickening influences and agencies, had played their part in contributing to his intellectual and spiritual equipment.

With such experiences behind him, Arthur was justified in his conviction that the best way in which he could use his knowledge and energy was the way he had decided to take.

Parsons, and especially Nonconformist parsons, are seldom fairly drawn in books professing to hold up the mirror to modern society. It provides a little relief perhaps to "work them in," as supplying material for supercilious criticism. The "smart-world" knows little of them except as connected with "bazaar-engineering," of "charity-organization," but has not much use for them considered as the custodians of divine mysteries.

But those who really know something of what life is—not on the surface merely, but in its very essence—are aware of the fact that even a probationer at Trengwith, doing his immediate duty, with his face steadfastly set towards still greater responsibilities, is likely to have a much more interesting, and certainly a much more useful career, than the majority of the inane and irresponsible persons who are so constantly "featured" as representing the most significant types of so-called Society.

Arthur had often been amused, and sometimes pained, when, in a much-boomed novel he had come across some hasty or untrue characterization of persons and things that he loved. In a recent book of this class which had drifted his way, one of the characters had been described as "The acid daughter of a Wesleyan Minister"; the impression to be left on the fiction-reading public evidently being that Methodism is a very sour thing—something quite alien to the cultured palate of Suburbia.

"How ridiculous, and how unfair!" thought the young minister. The Methodism that he

knew was so different from the idea conveyed in this misleading line of description. Recently, in his week-night lectures he had been giving his young people some idea of what the great evangelical pioneer of the eighteenth century had really stood for. Together they had pictured the deplorable moral condition of England at the time when Wesley and his band of preaching friars had made their effective protest against the corruptions prevailing in church and State, and they had seen how a new spirit had been breathed into social life by their faithful witness to spiritual and ethical truth.

It was quite time, he thought, that slipshod and ignorant criticism should cease. Modern Methodism, with its multitudes of happy, hospitable laity, its well-trained and devoted ministry, its princely benefactors, its wonderful network of circuits in town and country, its valuable church property, its splendidly equipped missions in the great centres of population, its noted schools, colleges, and orphanages, its magnificent missionary programme, its fine work in the Army and Navy, its scholarly literary output, its Guilds, Fellowships, Clubs and so forth—all this was something to be proud of, and Arthur *was* proud when he reflected that the church to which he belonged represented some of the finest ecclesiastical organizations in the world. All that he wanted now, he confessed to himself, as he finished his review, was a deepening of spiritual life, and a still fuller consecration of all his energies to the work of helping men and women, boys and girls, to cultivate those higher graces of character which

would make them all that God intended them to be ; would rescue their lives from inanity; would spiritualize and refine them, and save them from slavery to material interests; would make them courageous in facing even the most tragic facts of life and death, and would fill their hearts with hope, and love, and peace.

Was all this worth attempting?

Arthur concluded that it was, and, his meditations and devotions ended, he went up "over the timbern hill," and fell asleep with the distant murmur of ocean-music sounding in his ears.

CHAPTER X

A PLEASANT INTERLUDE

EVEN for parsons the process of mental analysis should not be permitted to become too absorbing, and after very successful and heartening New Year's services, Arthur, together with his Trengwithian friends, began to look forward with interest to the Old Cornwall concert on Twelfth Night.

Such a function, coming as it did at a particularly dull time of the year, was specially welcome, and when the night came the weather was fine and the moon at the full.

The Parish Hall, though large, was hard put to it to accommodate the folk who came from near and far. The village street was invaded by vehicles of all sorts and sizes. Squire Trengrouse brought a house-party from Tremellan Hall, the big mansion of the district, and the presence of " the gentry " gave additional éclat to the event.

It was rumoured in Trengwith that the Squire's eldest son, Jack Trengrouse, was becoming a frequent visitor at Trengwith Barton, and the gossips accordingly were beginning to shake their heads knowingly at one another. Well, why not? Jack was a fine manly young fellow, with a clean record; he had been at Winchester, was a County footballer, and a good all-round sportsman. He

had his full share of good looks, and at all social functions was a great favourite—with men as well as women. When Arthur Willesford first heard this rumour, as he was bound to do living in such a small world, he was surprised to find how strangely it affected him, but though he was careful to pass no personal opinion on the matter, and to give no visible evidence of any special interest concerning it, he felt, nevertheless, unexpectedly disturbed by the discovery of his growing regard for the charming and talented Cornish girl, whose homecoming to the Barton had contributed so greatly to his happiness.

Not that he thought Jack Trengrouse in any way an unworthy suitor for Frances. He had met the Squire's son several times and liked him for his manly ways. True he was a churchman and a Tory, like his father, and Frances' people were in an opposite camp. But, in love, such obstacles could perhaps be bridged, and as the Tresillians, though not so wealthy as Jack's people, were of an equally old Cornish family, it did seem as if the rumour was not ill-founded.

However, time would reveal the true state of affairs, and meanwhile Arthur might conscientiously continue to enjoy his privileged friendship with Frances, seeing that it meant so much to him. As for Frances, it is doubtful if at this stage of affairs she was at all anticipative of any probable change in the attitude of either Jack or Arthur. Apparently her feelings were as yet untouched by any thought of love. She was no coquette, and treated all the young men of her acquaintance with that blending

of candour and modesty which was the natural outcome of her home and school training.

The Concert proved to be full of interest from start to finish. Frances Tresillian, Nancy Mitchell, and the vicar gave Haydn's "Gipsy Rondo" as the first item, choosing it on account of its liveliness; country audiences as a rule being not very responsive to "tone-poems" of a sedater kind. Arthur had trained a mixed choir, drawn from the church and chapel singers, and these rendered three very ancient Cornish carols, which were greatly liked. The County song, "One and All," of course found a place on the programme, as did the popular "Pasties and Cream," the chorus of which, lustily joined in by all, sums up the salient attractions of the "Delectable Duchy."

Pasties and cream, tin in the stream,
Pilchards and herrings that sparkle and gleam;
Though I may roam, Cornwall's my home,
The dear old County of Cornwall.

Nancy Mitchell was responsible for two wonderfully brilliant violin solos. The villagers had never heard such playing before. Arpeggios, harmonics, deep surging tones, crisp roulades, marvellous double-stopping, clear flowing legato movements, unexpected melodic effects—she had all the resources of a really first-class player, and it was amusing to hear the comments of some who hitherto had not been aware of the possibilities of the instrument.

"Gaw! Can't her make un spaik? 'Tez bütivul

sure 'nuff! See her fingers flyin' all ovver un, upsy-down an' backsivore, as if her hand was made of injun rubber."

"My grandfaither played the violeen up to Voguebeloth Chapel, an' was reckoned a braäve player, but he cud'n 'andle un zo vitty as her do do!"

Even concert habitués, like the members of the Trengrouse house-party, were tremendously impressed. Jack Trengrouse led the applause, and his persistence ensured an encore for each item. Nancy was wearing her prettiest evening frock, and really looked charming as she played. She simply loved giving of her best to these happy, hearty Cornish folk. It was Jack who helped Nancy down from the platform, and Arthur noticed not without pleasure, that he (Jack) occupied the seat next her during the evening. After several other musical items with a distinct West Country flavour had been performed, Mr. Norton French, who had come over specially from St. Ina, took the platform and gave a short address on the aims of the "Old Cornwall Society." A recognized authority on antiquities and Folk-lore, his interesting remarks concerning old words and old ways, and of the need of keeping up the worthiest traditions of the County, were well received. He was succeeded by Mr. Tresillian, who was in his very best story-telling vein. His humour was irresistible and created roars of laughter, his command of the dialect being so perfect, and his knowledge of local eccentricities and general characteristics so accurate.

2

The Play, which was performed in the second half of the programme, was one of the oldest of the old masques or "guise-dances," once so popular with our forebears in Cornwall. The local dramatist had been obliged to omit certain coarse passages which, in a ruder age would have excited no adverse criticism, but had aimed at preserving the characteristic humour of this time-honoured country comedy.

Lady Lovell's Courtship has for its sub-title, *Duffy and the Demon Terrytop*. This Play, with all its rough-and-tumble fun, its interspersed jingles and ballads, its cleverly worked-in local allusions, and its true Cornish flavour, would take too long to describe in detail, but its action was something as follows:

Scene 1.—*The Squire's kitchen. Duffy, a young and pretty kitchen-maid, sits on the chimney-stool. Jane, the house-keeper* (*not very sober*) *holds fast by the table.*

Jane tells Duffy that she is "feelin'" bad sure 'nuff and must go to bed.

"You must bake the pie, Duffy, and give Squire his supper. Keep a good waking fire on the pie for an hour or more. Turn the glass again when the sand be half down, an' take the kittle off the vire. Mind there's a proper vire blazin' in the hall, for Squire'll be wet's a shag. Th' old *füle*, to bide out huntin' so long in a flood o' rain! Now, I'll take a cup o' still-water an' go up awver steers to bed."

Duffy assures Jane that everything will be all right, and as soon as Jane has gone young Huey Lenine (Lanyon) comes in to do "a bit o' courtin'."

Their amusingly tender dialogue is suddenly interrupted. A great stir outside indicates that the Squire has returned. He is heard calling to his dogs in stentorian tones.

Duffy and Huey are "davered," and the only thing to do is for Huey to get into the oven as the most convenient hiding-place. The Squire comes in bawling for his attendants. Duffy explains Jane's absence through indisposition, but the Squire is suspicious, he has heard voices.

"Who is here? I heard thee talking as I opened the door."

Duffy explains:—"I was drivin' away a gurt owl, Maister. He vell out o' th' ivy-bush on top o' th' chimbley, an' came tumblin' down through the smöak. He perched hisself there on the chimbley-stack, an' kept blinkin' an' peepin', 'till he heard the dogs barkin', an' then a began hootin' an' schreechin'. I took a stick to un an' was tryin' to scat un off his perch, but a flapped his wings an' vlied up chimbley same way's he came down!"

Duffy then implores the Squire to go into the hall where there is a blazing fire, but, the Squire lingers. He tells Duffy how proud he is of the stockings she had knit for him, he has been out all day in the rain but his feet and legs are "dry as a bone." Duffy tells the Squire that he must take care of them for she will soon have a man of her own to knit for.

The Squire is indignant when he finds that Huey Lenine is an accepted suitor, and threatens to break his neck if he catches him on the premises. He (the Squire) will wear no stockings but Duffy's, and the prospect of losing her annoys him. He places himself by Duffy on the chimney-stool. Terrytop (in the form of a mischievous imp) helps on the love-making by all sorts of demonic arts. (He is supposed to be invisible.) Huey, ever and anon, shows his disapproval of the Squire's courtship by shaking his fist at him through the oven door.

The Squire tells Duffy that if she will throw over Huey Lenine, she shall have silk-gowns and all sorts of finery and jewels out of his old oak-chest. As for his age, though he is near sixty he is stronger than many men of twenty. Duffy shall be a great lady.

"Thou shalt ride to church behind me, upon a new pillion
As grand as Madam Noy, or Madam Trezillian!"

Duffy is in two minds. Terrytop tickles the Squire under the ribs, and the elderly swain attempts to kiss Duffy, who takes the fire-prong and brandishes it in the Squire's face. Terrytop dances round them both. The pie meanwhile is burnt black. Duffy pushes the Squire off the stool. He jumps up and begins to dance and sing. Duffy and Terrytop join in. Huey crawls out of the oven and receives his *congé* from his faithless sweetheart, who addresses him thus :

"Now take thyzelf outzide the door,
An' niver show thy faäce here more:
I'd niver wed a gawk like thee
I'll be a lady of high degree."

Between the two acts of the Play there was a short interval, during which a number of boys and girls, trained by the school-mistress, performed some charming folk-dances, and the three instrumentalists played a *Sarabande* by Bach, and a delightful *Bourrée* by Purcell.

Scene 2.—Introduces Lady Lovell (Duffy) after the wedding, dressed in the rich, but antiquated finery which has come from the afore-mentioned chest.

The Squire (assiduously encouraged by his ally, Terrytop) endeavours to keep his bride in a good temper, but she is tired of him already, and, after all sorts of by-play designed to modify or remove her petulance, the true state of her feelings is expressed in her closing song :

"Terrytop, Terrytop, come at my call
And take the old varmint—silks, satins, an' all!
Wi' jewels an' rings so fine:
Then, merry an' gay, I'd be all the day
In the cot o' my true-love, young Huey Lenine."

3

The drama ended at this stage, and there was no hint that Terrytop ever responded to the appeal to

undo his mischievous work. No doubt Lady Lovell had to pay the penalty of her cupidity, but the audience seemed pleased to think that the unfortunate Huey was so tenderly remembered by his old flame, and applauded her heartily at the close of her song.

Such is the rough outline of the old masque which had been adapted from *Hunt's Romances and Drolls*. It would be, of course, despised by "high-brows," but here in Trengwith it went down very well. The simple rustic *motif* was greatly helped by the verve of the performers, and their amusing by-play caused no end of fun.

Altogether the "Old Cornwall Concert," with its interesting medley of items, musical, terpsichorean, and histrionic, was a great success, and was talked of for weeks afterwards.

John Trewhella, however, as might be expected, was dubious as to the value of such entertainments. He had been persuaded to attend, but had not felt very comfortable. To Oliver Trembath he confided his opinion that "All this here gammetting can't do no good!"

"Well," replied his more liberal-minded colleague, "we must onbend a bit sometimes; even the Apostle John used to play wi' a tame patteridge, I'm told. A bit o' music such as we had to-night is a rare trait, it do take 'ee out o' yourself-like."

"Ah," replied Trewhella, "I should a-liked to have heard 'em all sing, 'Now I have found the ground wherein,' an' as for that there play actin' I don't hold wi't at all. Think how many young

folk is bein' ruined by theayters, bagatelle, whisk-drives, an' the likes o' that."

"Now John," Oliver remonstrated, "it don't do to take too gloomy a view. A little fun now an' then do do 'ee a passel o' good. I ha'nt laughed so much for a twelve-month as I have to-night, an' its done me good in my innards. 'Twas lovely to see the folk, young an' old, enjoyin' theirselves real vitty, an' though I don't hold wi' a constant round o' merrymakin', I b'lieve we be all the better for a little o' the sort of thing we've had to-night."

And they left it at that, while the villagers, and visitors generally, agreed that they had spent one of the jolliest social evenings in the annals of Trengwith.

CHAPTER XI

ALL IN THE DAY'S WORK

DURING the interval between Christmas and Easter, Arthur was kept very busy, and all the time he could spare from pressing Circuit duties was given to the preparation of his examination work, the result of which would, in due course, be presented at the Synod in May.

In addition to the set papers in Greek, Hebrew, Theology, Church History, and Sociology, he, in common with all other probationers, was expected to read as many books as possible selected from an official list, which embraced works by outstanding authors on Bible-study, Dogmatics, Church Organization, Pastoral Theology, Comparative Religion, Philosophy, and Economics—Poetry and Fiction being left to each man's own choice.

Although Arthur was a degree man, he was not exempted from the definite programme of study prescribed for Probationary Ministers of the Church to which he belonged; and this he had the sense to recognize was all to the good, for the possession of a degree in Arts is no real guarantee that a man is perfectly equipped for a ministerial or any other vocation; neither is it necessarily the hall-mark of the truest culture, for multitudes of widely-read

and thoroughly efficient writers, speakers, and thinkers, can lay no claim to academic distinction.

Arthur therefore prepared all his work with conscientious care, knowing that it all had special bearing on the task he had undertaken. He ordered the books which most appealed to him on the official list, and being by nature a "bookman," he found the reading of them a most engrossing occupation, the more so because he was not expected to "get them up" for exam purposes, but simply to hand in a guarantee that he had read on the lines required by those who had been appointed to guide his post-college course of study.

Perhaps there is no church which exercises more careful supervision over its coming Ordinands than that to which Arthur belonged, and in after years, when the reading of many great books would be rendered extremely difficult on account of the pressing practical duties to be attended to, he, and others like him, would be very grateful for the long quiet hours spent in "diggings," over works so eminently calculated to widen the intellectual horizon, and stimulate the soul to the highest level of endeavour.

The work of study and of sermon preparation, was constantly relieved by the "humanities" as they are to be found, not in books but in personal contact with all sorts and conditions of people. A large part of Arthur's education in pastoral wisdom and tactfulness consisted in his trying to get to know the real facts which lay behind the daily lives of the persons he was constantly meeting in town and village.

He had that great qualification for the "cure of souls," *sociality*. To use an Americanism he was "a good mixer," and in humble cottages, as well as in wealthy homes, he learnt much that tended to supplement his book-knowledge in a very profitable and practical way.

By this time Arthur and the vicar were great friends. True they still broke an ecclesiastical lance or two on occasion, but were able to differ without any breach of friendly feeling. To drop in at the Vicarage for an occasional chat and smoke, or to borrow one of Mr. Russell's antiquarian books, was very pleasant.

A young medical man, Dr. Hawking, whose practice often brought him to Trengwith, had become very friendly with Arthur, and they exchanged visits fairly frequently. Dr. Hawking lived on the outskirts of St. Penza, and sometimes on his way home from preaching in the Circuit Chapel Arthur would look in, and always received a warm welcome from the Doctor and his wife. Mrs. Hawking was young and charming, moreover, she was a dainty house-wife, and a very gifted pianist, and as Arthur had no piano at Mrs. Mann's, he often stayed late in order to enjoy her delightful playing.

Sometimes the Doctor and the Minister would be more in the mood for talk. Doctors see much of a side of human life which parsons know comparatively little about, and Arthur's idealism with regard to Cornwall and its people often received a shock as the Doctor spoke frankly about certain ugly facts which he was constantly being faced with in the course of his professional duties.

It was, he said, no use camouflaging the fact that the evils of sexual immorality were not regarded so seriously by large numbers of Cornish people as they should be. Drunkenness had always been looked upon by them as one of the deadliest of sins, but there was a regrettable looseness on the part of many with regard to the other matter, not to be equalled he said in any other county in England.

He marshalled much evidence in proof of his contention, and told Arthur that in his opinion, clergymen and ministers ought to be far more definite than they were in speaking of specific sins. To deal with moral evil in a merely theological or abstract way was futile. It would, of course, be difficult to use plain terms in condemning publicly such a glaring evil as the one under discussion, but that something ought to be done about the matter his many disconcerting cases amongst all classes had absolutely convinced him.

Arthur himself had been forced to recognize the presence of sinister influences at work which were inimical to the moral standards he would fain see obtaining everywhere. Even in quiet lovely Trengwith itself sad things had happened, of which he had heard with the keenest sorrow, and his talks with Dr. Hawking only served to strengthen his resolve to be more faithful and frequent in reminding himself, as well as those to whom he preached, that "The body is the temple of the Holy Ghost."

But all said and done the great mystery of life is not the mystery of lawlessness, but the mystery of goodness. Many there might be who would

subscribe to the dangerous doctrine that "Man's passions are his safest and surest guides"; but how greatly these were outnumbered by those who were really trying to live according to the highest ideals they knew.

Arthur thought of his own experiences in visiting some of his people.

One day he had gone to see dear old Father Collacott, who was "nearing the verge." The old man lay in his sparsely furnished room, with few comforts to cheer him, but there was a strange radiance on his face as he had welcomed the "praicher."

"Come nearer my son," he had said, "I do want to tell 'ee somethin'."

Arthur bent down to listen, for the old man's voice was very weak.

"Live near to God, my son! Live near to God!"

That was all Arthur had heard from the lips of the old saint, whose little flame of life had well-nigh flickered out.

All! But was not that everything that mattered? What learned Theologian could give more important counsel? Life from the cradle to the grave, what a mystery it is! And what real significance has it if Father Collacott's simple but profound prescription for earthly and celestial blessing is ignored?

Then there was "Sister Jewell"—still vigorous, mentally and physically, despite her seventy years. Arthur always enjoyed visiting her in her sweet little cottage. Her beautiful white hair and "rosy

apple" complexion seemed worthy adornments of the truly catholic views she held on the subject of religion.

"I daw'nt believe," she would say, "in rinnin' down other volks religion. There's far too much o' that sort o' thing nowadays, but I've a-lived long enough to see that there's gude in all volks, whativer naämes they do plaize to call theirzelves.

"Now here be I, a Methody barn an' bred. I've a-heerd say that John Wesley praiched in my grandfaither's kitchen, an' niver a Zunday but finds me up to chapel in the second sait back from the pulpit, waitin' on the Word, an' feedin' 'pon sperritoöal food, whether it be gived out by a local or a reg'lar 'Rounder.'

"I've a-got all my class-teckets since my girlhood, an' I be up three score an' ten, but tho' I be a Methody myzel, I do zim that the Lord do niver require everybody to think ezackly the zame, or there wudd'n be much variety I regg'n.

"Now luke to my l'il bit o' garden. Here's stocks, an' sweet-Willyums, an' bliddy-waryers, an' roses, an' sweet-pays, all bloomin' together in the blessed sunshine.

"Tid'n no use to find fault wi' a flower because it baint somethin' else. Aich wan's got its own smill an' blooth, an' we must take 'em as they be.

"Tez zackly so wi' Christians in the Garden o' the Lord. If they *be* Christians then the naäme don't matter much.

"Be they givin' out the fragrance of a gude life? *That's* what I want to know."

Surely even an archbishop could hardly better

this, in any pronouncement he might feel inclined to make on the subject of spiritual unity, and Arthur felt as he listened to "Sister Jewell," that she had got to the very heart of things concerning it.

"Ah, yes, 'tez awnly Love that railly matters! Love to God, an' love to man! Niver mind wranglin' 'bout naämes an' sectses. There's three things that 'bide, Faith, an' Hope, an' Love; but *Love* be the greatest thing in the world!"

Sometimes in listening to the spiritual and domestic confidences of the older "Members of Society" Arthur had great difficulty in keeping himself from showing signs of amusement. Some of them put things so quaintly, even when relating what to them were deeply solemn experiences.

For instance, Betsy Nancarrow, giving an account of her conversion, "back to the Great Revival," had said to him:—"I'd a-bin exercised in sperrit for up a fortnight, an' one night, my dear Class-leader, Mr. Alfred Chynale (he's gone to glory now, God bless'n)—come up, an' put he's hand 'pon my shoulder, and, sez he, 'Your life for mine Betsy, you'll be convarted afore the night's out.'

"And," Betsy continued, "so soon's I heerd un spaik they words, I felt the burden go from my niddick (neck) like two strikes (loads) o' sand, and I ain't had no occasion to go back to the beggarly elemunts o' the world since!"

In the farm-kitchens, with their open hearths and glowing wood fires, Arthur heard much talk about old times and the new. The opinion was freely expressed by many of the older folk that

" things wasn't as they did use for to be, more's the pity! "

" Too much eddicaätion, that's what be doin' all the mischief! Young people learnin' the pianner instead of bein' trained to *louster*, like us belonged to do. Too much gammetting about, instead of 'bidin' home an' 'tendin' to their dooty! "

Arthur often had to put in a word for the young people, who, as " heirs of all the ages," could hardly be expected to throw themselves back into the thoughts and ways of their more hardly nurtured forebears. But, from his close association with them (the young folk) in church and social life, he knew that in the main they were shaping well, and that the tendency of some of them to be inclined occasionally to " kick over the traces," and to refuse to come into line with conventional notions and observances, was not necessarily an indication of degeneracy on their part, but was rather to be regarded as evidence of an independence of spirit, which, if rightly used, might carry them farther along the most desirable paths of life than ever the wise-acres in the chimney-corners had travelled.

And so, engrossed with his studies, and with his very varied pastoral experiences, the first few months of the year passed with surprising swiftness.

Nancy Mitchell had returned to London a few days after the concert, and Frances Tresillian had settled down to her work in the home and in the church. Arthur's visits to the Barton continued to give him the keenest pleasure. There was often

company there in the evenings, for Mr. and Mrs. Tresillian had a wide circle of friends who were not slow in availing themselves of the open-house hospitality which they could always depend on meeting with at Trengwith Barton.

When there was no company there was always a chance of listening to Frances' playing, and as she kept in practice, and was constantly adding to her répertoire, her recitals were very delightful.

When a young fellow, living in rooms in a quiet village, has a free evening, and knows that a few hundred yards away there is a home ever open to him, where all that is most desirable in life on its social and domestic side is concentrated, it is no wonder that he should avail himself often of the privileges which were so freely given him.

Arthur's battles with Mr. Tresillian at chess were fought with increasing zest as time went on. There was little to choose between the two players, but whichever of them won or lost, they both realized the absorbing spell of this most ancient and fascinating of games, and were "baffled only that they might fight better" next time.

And so the winter passed, and almost before the Trengwithians were prepared, spring was on them with a rush.

CHAPTER XII

THE LURE OF THE PAST

WE trust that our account of Arthur Willesford's experiences and aims, as connected with the main features of his character and vocation, has not given the impression that his thoughts were in danger of being restricted to purely personal or denominational affairs.

The mere cleric is apt to become more or less of a bore, and therefore, interests and studies, quite outside those essential to a parson's profession, are helpful in enabling him to get away at times from his ordinary every-day routine.

An appointment to a village charge in Cornwall would be regarded as something very like a penance by phlegmatic persons with little or no poetry in their natures, and whose imaginations are rarely influenced by the literary, historical, or archæological records of the locality in which they happen to reside.

But Cornwall was a "land of pure delight" to one like Arthur Willesford, who fortunately possessed just that kind of temperament which was calculated to make him keenly appreciative of his surroundings. Conscious as he was of his responsiveness to the *romance-spirit* which brooded so persistently over the "rocky land" in which he

was privileged to make a temporary sojourn, he felt convinced that his experiences in the Delectable Duchy, would leave a permanent mark upon his mind, especially upon its poetic side. Yes! Cornwall—with its cairns and crosses; its saints and smugglers; its lovely valleys and lonely granite-strewn moors; its creeks and harbours; its quaint, huddled, fishing-villages; its gaunt mining-towns; its grey churches and ancient castles; its wave-swept beaches and echoing caverns; its haunting legends and traditions; its fascinating people and old-world dialect—was just the place to stimulate that strain of romantic feeling which, as we have said, was a marked feature in Arthur's character.

By "romance," we mean, of course, the element of mystery and wonder in Nature, Art, and History, which brings the mind under the spell of a shadow-haunted Past. All really cultivated natures are bound to be influenced by it, and when the mind grows weary, as it so often does, of the vexatious insistence of modern social and intellectual problems, it is beneficial to allow ourselves to be taken possession of by the dream-spirit which broods constantly over susceptible souls, and which seeks to bring them into an enchanted Bourne, peopled with mystic or heroic beings, whose ideals or achievements, vague and remote though their historic setting may be, are yet capable of being construed into symbols representing spiritual realities, by those whose imaginations are sufficiently alive for such romantic exercises.

Arthur therefore gladly seized every opportunity of extending his knowledge of Cornish History,

Literature, and Folk-lore, and of entering as fully as possible into the domain of old-world romanticism which so fascinated him, here in the remote "sea-sounding wastes of Lyonesse."

One beautiful afternoon in April, during a solitary ramble undertaken as a relief from his book-work, Arthur entered Tremellan Woods, and there met Jack Trengrouse with his dogs and gun. The young men had had several casual conversations, but this time Jack was specially cordial in his greeting, and insisted on Arthur's accompanying him back to the Hall for tea and a game of billiards.

Arthur, having no evening engagement, was very pleased to accept the invitation, especially as he knew that Squire Trengrouse represented in his person and estate some of the oldest traditions of that part of the County, and a visit to Jack's ancestral home would be a welcome change from his (Arthur's) usual methodical routine.

Tremellan Hall delighted Arthur, appealing as it did so thoroughly to his antiquarian susceptibilities. The mansion was long and low, built of Cornish granite, with deep mullioned windows. It faced towards the south-west, and was sheltered from the north winds by a wood composed chiefly of sturdy, wind-bitten oaks, whilst its wide terraces were flanked with some of the most magnificent rhododendrons Arthur had ever seen. They were just beginning to burst into flower, and Jack told Arthur that very few places in England could boast of such wonderful varieties as were to be seen here, the soil being so exactly suited to their needs.

Entering through a porch, guarded by massive age-worn pillars of granite, the young men entered a spacious hall tiled in black and white marble, and hung with family portraits and sporting trophies. Passing through the hall they came into the library where, before a glowing fire of logs in the great open fire place, they found the Squire and his Lady just about to commence afternoon-tea.

Arthur received a very kind welcome from them both. They had heard a good deal about him from the vicar and others, and were pleased to make his acquaintance.

Ensconced in a huge leather "saddle-bag," and enveloped in an atmosphere of fine Cornish hospitality, the visitor soon felt thoroughly at home, and when tea was over, and a proferred cigarette from Jack's case accepted and enjoyed, Arthur asked to be allowed to explore the library. This proved most fascinating to a real book-lover, for the collection of books was of that ideal kind which only the oldest country mansions can show.

Arthur had never before seen the earliest edition of *Camden's Britannia*, and it was with keen pleasure that he handled the ponderous old tome. Some of the most ancient and valuable of the old *County Histories* were here, as well as many rare black-letter, vellum-bound volumes, dating from mediæval times, while as for the eighteenth century literature (first editions in many instances, and bound solidly in calf stamped with the Tremellan crest), it all seemed to have found a perfectly appropriate setting in this nobly proportioned room.

The works of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett,

De Foe, Goldsmith, Johnson, Gray, Gibbon, together with hosts of other half-forgotten historians, philosophers, poets, novelists, and theologians, went to swell the sum-total of a miscellaneous but uniquely interesting collection. Arthur could have spent days here browsing at will amongst these fascinating volumes.

Jack, however, who was no book-man, succeeded at last in dragging his guest away from the bookshelves, and carried him off to the billiard-room for the stipulated game, and, before they realized the lapse of time, the first gong sounded for dinner.

"I must be going now," said Arthur, putting his cue in the rack.

"Not a bit of it," Jack replied. "You will stay and dine here."

"I can't possibly in these clothes."

"Oh, hang it! What *does* it matter? We have no company, and often do not trouble to observe the conventions when we are alone. Besides I can see that the governor has taken a fancy to you, and if you can set him yarning after dinner about Cornish matters, in which I understand you are so interested, he will be able to 'put you wise' as the Yankees say."

Just then the Squire entered in the velvet coat he was accustomed to don as a sort of compromise for dinner-dress on non-guest nights, and, on hearing of Arthur's diffidence, bore down all opposition in his bluff good-humoured way, so that it would have been foolish to have refused an invitation so heartily given.

Dinner was delightfully served in the great panelled dining-room, and afterwards the little party returned to the library for coffee, this room seeming to be, and no wonder, the favourite rendezvous of the family.

2

Squire Trengrouse was something more than a mere sporting Squire. Educated at Winchester and Oxford, he had kept up his intellectual pursuits and was specially interesting when he could be induced to talk about the literature and history of his native County. This evening he proved luckily to be in a discursive vein, fortunately for Arthur, and while Jack, whose idea was "to let Dad rip," for his visitor's benefit, overhauled a pile of new magazines, and Mrs. Trengrouse occupied herself with her knitting, the young minister and his host had a good talk about Cornwall and its people.

There were several points on which Arthur, as a neophyte in Cornish lore, desired fuller information, and certainly he could not have had his wish gratified under more congenial circumstances. For here in Cornwall's very heart, he was being entertained in one of the most historic houses in the County, by a Cornish gentleman, whose ancestor had fought with Sir Beville Granville at Lansdown, in that grim fight in which the battalions of the Parliament had prevailed, and in which Sir Beville, of Stowe, the Bayard of Old Corn-

wall, had been slain. The Squire had Hawker's stirring ballad, *Sir Beville—The Gate Song of Stowe*, by heart and rolled out one or two ringing stanzas:

Ay! By Tre, Pol, and Pen, ye may Know
Cornishmen,
'Mid the names and the nobles of Devon:
But if truth to the King be a signal, why then
Ye can find out the Granville in Heaven.

. . . . . .

Ride! Ride! with red spur, there is death in delay,
'Tis a race for dear life with the Devil;
If dark Cromwell prevail, and the King must give
way
This earth is no place for Sir Beville!

The quotation of these verses led the Squire on to speak of Hawker, the singular poet-priest of Cornwall, whose poems and ballads enshrine so much of the legend, history, and romance of vanished days.

"I always think of 'Passon Hawker,'" said he, "as an outstanding example of the influence exercised by environment on a person's thought. If Hawker, early in his ministry had been appointed to a charge in a busy industrial centre, his record would have been vastly different; but the solitariness of his position caused him to take special interest in the romantic records of 'the Western Shore,' and these he caused to live again, as the esult of his naturally vivid imagination."

"Have you ever visited Morwenstowe?" Arthur asked.

"Yes," answered the Squire, "and having seen Hawker's vicarage and church—the Saxon shrine of Saint Morwenna, which he loved so well, and where he ministered for more than forty years—and having also explored most of that part of the Cornish coast, I can quite understand the spell which such wildly-grand surroundings was calculated to exercise over a poetically inclined nature such as Hawker possessed.

"Take for instance his famous ballad, *The Bells of Bottreaux*, what storm-music is in it, what a weird blending it is of the human and the supernatural!"

The Squire went on to speak of Hawker's personal prejudices and eccentricities, some of his stories being most amusing.

"He was a strange mixture," the Squire admitted, "but we Cornishmen are grateful to him for his unique contributions to our County literature. His *Quest of the Sangraal* is a magnificent Arthurian fragment, and I have been given to understand that when Tennyson read it he was thrilled, and said 'Hawker has beaten me on my own ground!'"

Touching upon the traditions connected with King Arthur, in the West, the Squire said that although Arthur was claimed as a Prince in Wales, Brittany, and Scotland, Tennyson had done (in *his* view at any rate) the right thing, in claiming Cornwall as the scene of Arthur's nativity.

"I daresay you remember, Mr. Willesford, the passage in *Guinevere* which refers to this mythical

event?" and the Squire quoted the famous lines :

"For there was no man knew from whence he came,
But after tempest, when the long wave broke
All down the thundering shores of Bude and Bos,
There came a day as still as Heaven, and then
They found a naked child upon the sands
Of dark Tintagel by the Cornish sea;
And that was Arthur; and they fostered him
'Till he by miracle was aproven King."

Reverting to Sir Beville Granville, and his wonderful loyalty to King Charles, Arthur asked the Squire how it was that Cornish people generally had proved so devoted to the Crown during the Stuart wars, when such devotion as theirs had evidently so little to rest upon where the Royal character was concerned.

"Well," replied the Squire, "the only explanation I can give is just this. The Cornish folk are gregarious and very impulsive. Their motto, 'One and All' is itself a disclaimer of a half-and-half policy. When our people go for a cause, they are inclined to go 'hell for leather,' as the soldiers say. Their greatest inspiration arises from the consciousness that they are 'all in it.'

"During the Reformation," continued the Squire, "the Cornish were almost the only English people who rebelled for the ancient faith, and just now Cornwall is, perhaps, the most thoroughly dis-

senting of any English County. But when Charles and his Parliament clashed, the Cornish folk almost unanimously took the King's side, and you may still see in some of our churches, a Royal address, painted on panel, setting forth his Majesty's thanks to his Cornish supporters.

"Then, too, you remember, Mr. Willesford, that when the seven Bishops were sent to the Tower, Cornwall blazed with indignation, and rose as one man to insist on the release of Bishop Trelawny and his fellow prisoners. The well-known Trelawny ballad was on thousands of lips, and thousands were prepared to march on London that they might 'know the reason why.'"

"Who really *are* the Cornish, Mr. Trengrouse?" Arthur asked.

The Squire plunged at once into a longish dissertation, from which his questioner succeeded in getting hold of a few leading facts.

"It is said that in Queen Elizabeth's day, an old geography-book stated that, 'Cornwall is a foreign country, on that side of England next to Spain.' The name is supposed to be 'The Welsh of the Horn' (Cornu Wealas), and an old nickname for Cornwall is 'Western Barbary!'

"It is generally acknowledged that Wales and Brittany have much in common linguistically, but the old Cornish language has gone, and only relics of it survive in our peculiar family and place-names.

"The original Cornish were undoubtedly descended from the Kelts, but there are traces of

other alien races to be discerned in our County types.

"I am not an authority on the point," the Squire continued, "and am not prepared to dogmatize concerning the Phœnician and Jewish elements which, according to some, were grafted into the original Keltic stock. There always has been, however, a strongly marked difference between pure Anglo-Saxons and the Cornu-British, and when the latter were forced into the Western corner of the land by Athelstan, in 925, and finally driven across the Tamar, that river came to be regarded as a boundary between Kelt and Saxon, and still, in spite of the freedom of modern intercourse, is sentimentally looked upon as a dividing line between the two races."

"Is much known about the old Cornish language," Arthur inquired.

"Well," answered the Squire, "you know, of course, that a group of modern enthusiasts are trying to get Cornish people to take up the study of their primitive language. Mr. Norton French said something about it, you will remember, in his address at the Old Cornwall Concert, but it seems evident, to me at any rate, that such study can only be seriously undertaken by a few persons with special antiquarian and philological qualifications."

"The old language is really dead then?"

"Yes, as far as speaking it is concerned, but it may still be read by those who are keen enough to master its vocabulary and grammar sufficiently to enable themselves to spell out some of the literary fragments of the ancient Cornish tongue which

have been preserved in various libraries up and down the country.

"And yet," the Squire soliloquized, "it is very interesting to remember that three centuries ago *Cornish* was the common speech of the inhabitants in the extreme West of England. In the reign of Henry the Eighth the old tongue was used in all the churches of Cornwall, and I have read that the first parish into which the English service was introduced was that of Menheniot, and that the last sermon in Cornish was not preached until about 1678. This was at Landewednack, near the Lizard, and the preacher, Thomas Cole, was, so it is said, more than a hundred years old.

"Still," the Squire went on, "as I said just now, the old Keltic tongue of Cornwall survives in our family and place-names which sound so strange in the ears of our 'English' visitors. These relics of our dead language certainly help to keep alive our interest in the ancient vernacular."

"Cornish names," said Arthur, "seem very peculiar to me as a new-comer into this part of the country, but somehow I love the sound of them, for they evidently enshrine all sorts of archaic meanings."

"Yes," replied the Squire, "our past history is really locked up in these old words, for in Cornwall there is hardly a field which does not bear—though often perhaps in a corrupt form—a name given to it in the days when Cornish was the sole language of our County."

Arthur thanked the Squire for his valuable little lecture, and told him that he certainly hoped

to follow up a subject so calculated to shed light on past Cornubian history.

The conversation then turned on other aspects of Cornish thought and life, and the Squire had much to say about the comparatively slow advance of civilization in this part of England, which tardiness helped to foster the clannish spirit amongst the natives. He went on to tell stories of smugglers, miners, and fishermen, and did not forget to touch upon the strange superstitions which still linger (even amongst the more educated class); and he ended up by giving Arthur an amusing account of the notorious part which Cornwall had played in the political controversies of the period preceding the passing of the Reform Act in 1832.

"At that time, Mr. Willesford, if you can believe me, Cornwall actually returned forty-four members to Parliament, while the entire kingdom of Scotland returned only forty-five.

"Some of our most insignificant villages enjoyed the franchise, while such towns as Falmouth, Redruth, and Penzance, had no parliamentary voice whatever."

The Squire's humorous accounts of the old election-battles, fought under the most grotesque conditions, were indeed a revelation. Amongst other things he told Arthur that East Looe and West Looe—two halves of one small town, separated by a river, and possessing about 1500 inhabitants and 100 voters—actually had two Corporations, and four Members of Parliament. Launceston also had two, and Newport, its outlying

village-suburb, also had two. At Camelford, a house erected to create a number of voters by giving outsiders a residence in the borough, was undermined and blown up by the opposite party; and at Tingtagel it was considered correct for the Members to come down now and then to get drunk with their constituents, and some of the old carousing glasses still exist.

"How do you account for this unfair monopoly of political privileges?" Arthur asked.

"The reason was simply this," said the Squire, "that from early times Cornwall had belonged to the Crown, and these petty boroughs were created to check popular influence in the House of Commons, in the end most of them became private property—pocket-boroughs—hence the abuses."

3

It was late when Arthur rose to go. His thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Trengrouse for giving him such a delightful "Cornish" evening were indeed sincere, and the Squire told him that he would be welcome at the Hall whenever he felt inclined to come, and that any books in the library that he wished to consult were at his disposal.

Jack strolled down the avenue, as far as the entrance gates, with his visitor.

"You and the governor have been fairly 'going it' to-night," he said.

"I am afraid that it must have been rather slow for you," Arthur replied, "but you see I am new

to Cornwall, and these things that are so familiar to such people as yourselves bring me into a world of thought and tradition which I find very fascinating."

"Well," Jack remarked, "it's all right if you don't get *too* stodgy: for my part I don't live much in the Past, I find the Present very absorbing, and next time you come I shall try to keep you off books and antiquarian matters; we will have a go at the rabbits in the fields and woods here, and enjoy ourselves in other purely Pagan ways."

"That will suit me very well," said Arthur. "I am not always questing for information as I have been to-night, but it was a rare privilege for me to find your father in such good talking form, and I shall always look back upon my first visit to Tremellan with peculiar pleasure."

The young men separated at the gates, and Arthur trudged back under the stars to Trengwith, his mind still pleasantly excited by the stimulus of his long conversation on matters so full of romantic and historic interest.

Mrs. Mann had never known any of her ministerial lodgers return home so late as Arthur did on this occasion. "Willyum," had gone to bed hours ago, and Mrs. Mann, who had been waiting to lock up for the night, seemed in a rather severe mood when Arthur at last arrived. But on learning where he had spent the evening her usual good humour returned, for she liked the thought that their "young praicher" was appreciated in circles outside his own

"Methodistic" one, and looked upon this new adventure with approval.

"Ah, well! You'm gettin' in wi' the gentry now, I s'pose. But 'tis just so well to be friendly wi' 'One and All,' an' Churchman an' Tory though he be, to my mind Squire Trengrouse ez a prapper good sort."

And Arthur, as he retired, thoroughly endorsed his landlady's opinion.

CHAPTER XIII

SUMER IS A-COMIN IN

IT has most likely been noticed by those who have followed our homely chronicle up to this point, that very little, if anything, has been said concerning the physical inconveniences under which work of any kind has to be done during the winter months by those who live in rural districts. Even in towns, with all their conveniences in the way of brilliant lighting, quick transport, and so forth, our English winter is a very trying affair, and if, in our desire to emphasize more especially the idealistic side of Arthur Willesford's life at Trengwith, we have omitted to touch upon less pleasant details, our excuse is the very reasonable one that country disabilities must be taken for granted and made the best of.

Arthur certainly had his share of discomfort in having to visit and take appointments in all weathers. Walks and drives that were delightful in the mellow mildness of the Fall, became very trying on pitch-dark nights, when the rain lashed down remorselessly, when the wind howled over moor and valley with hurricane violence, and when it was often exceedingly difficult, owing to the

combined fury of the elements, to discern and keep to the homeward road or by-path.

Still, even experiences like these are part and parcel of the programme prescribed for a probationer situated as Arthur was. It often meant a wrench to leave his cosy study-fire, and his books and papers—just as daylight was fading, and other folks beginning to settle in for the evening—and start off on foot, or on his cycle, to fulfil an appointment in a distant village.

Often, too, on stormy nights, his congregations would be extremely small, and, to one more pessimistic by nature than Arthur was, the "game would hardly seem to be worth the candle" (or the oil in the chapel lamps).

A strong sense of duty, however, caused the young probationer to be most conscientious in taking all the preaching and other services allotted to him by his superintendent. The ministry, after all, was no mere academical affair. It involved all sorts of self-denials often not thought of by those accustomed to disparage the parson's "soft job." The picture of a solitary youth, accustomed hitherto to fairly easy conditions of life, making his way, "in a death-dumb, autumn-dripping gloom," to a way-side Cornish chapel, would seem to the supercilious critic to savour more of the quixotic than the heroic. But it is only in this way that the continuity of spiritual work can be maintained in wide country districts, and to destroy this continuity by yielding to that "softness and needless self-indulgence," against which John Wesley so often

warned his preachers, would be disastrous to all circuit arrangements.

Arthur found, however, that there was a guerdon to be gained, "the reward of it all," and often he came away with a strange glow in his heart, caused by his contact with the few faithful souls who had assembled to meet him. Sometimes, when, owing to the inclement weather, the company was very small, Arthur would leave the pulpit and ask those present to gather round the stove, and then he would speak to them in a simple unconventional way about "the deep things of God." Such talks were greatly enjoyed, and Arthur was careful on such occasions not to do all the talking himself, but encouraged the friends to express themselves freely on those subjects which were nearest to their hearts. In this way the bond between the young minister and his people became even closer than that likely to be formed by purely *ex cathedra* methods, and thus the plain little chapel, on the wind-swept moor, or in the deep sequestered valley, with the light from its windows valiantly challenging the surrounding gloom, became, not merely to those outside, a symbol of the Church's mission, but to those inside, in deed and truth, "the house of God, and the very gate of heaven."

Fortunately "Every Winter turns to Spring" at last, and spring in Cornwall is indeed a wondrous season. The primroses arrive earlier and are more abundant than in any other part of the country. How Arthur revelled in their beauty, and how delicious it was to note the quickening of life in the rapidly greening hedgerows and flower-starred

lanes. April and May too, meant not only that the winter had passed and that "the time of the singing of birds had come," but also that after seven months of very close application to study and circuit-work, there had come to Arthur, in the natural course of things, a welcome respite from many of his pressing duties.

People were now busy in fields and gardens, and many meetings and services maintained during the winter months were discontinued.

His examination work finished, and all his papers sent in, Arthur was grateful for the larger amount of leisure which was legitimately his. He was able to enjoy several rounds of golf with Jack Trengrouse on some famous links a few miles down the coast, and he also did a little sketching in oils, of which work he was fond, and though his results were amateurish, he certainly did succeed in getting some rather striking effects—especially of cliff and sea scenery—which were calculated to give a fairly good idea of the rugged beauty of the Cornish coast to those not unduly given to severe technical criticism.

Mrs. Mann thought these sketches marvellous, and Arthur, to give her pleasure, did a whole set of half-a-dozen local scenes, "The Towans," "The Lighthouse," "Godfrey Point," etc., and fixed them up with drawing-pins to the panels of the cupboard in her sitting-room, where, I believe, if you ever find your way to Trengwith, they are still treasured to this day by the worthy dame, as perhaps the most interesting "momentums" ever left behind by a clerical lodger.

The coming of spring, though it meant a great deal of slackening-off in week-night engagements, brought with it, on the other hand, a "certain liveliness" in connection with other circuit arrangements.

The period lasting from the middle of April to the end of June is "Anniversary Time," and the "Children's Days," held on those Sundays devoted to their school anniversaries, are high days indeed for all who attend these extremely popular services.

Arthur Willesford found himself in similar embarrassments to those which had beset him during the Harvest Festival season. Requests that he should be the anniversary preacher were very numerous, and for weeks his list of appointments displayed a succession of these outstanding events throughout the circuit. Mr. Fairweather, Arthur's genial superintendent, was wise enough not to be jealous of his young colleague's popularity; he knew the Cornish love of novelty, and, having "shot his own bolt" the year before, he was only too pleased to fall in with the general desire for Arthur's services on these special occasions.

As for Arthur himself, he was by no means conscious of possessing any very special knowledge on the subject of children and the best means of training them domestically and religiously. But the people, young and old, evidently seemed to take it for granted that their ministers, married or single, grey-headed or fresh from college, had the whole business at their finger's ends, and so—to

congregations that crowded the chapels to excess —Arthur did his best to deal with a subject, which, from Plato's time, and long before, down to the present day, has challenged the earnest attention of sociologists and religionists representing every school of thought.

It goes without saying that he could hardly help repeating himself, for it was hardly to be expected that a fresh set of ideas concerning child psychology and parental responsibilities could be presented each time he appeared in the pulpit, but he soon found his bearings, taking the simplest and most scriptural lines; in the morning generally preaching a sermon specially designed for scholars and teachers, and in the evening addressing the congregation at large on some of the more pressing problems connected with home and national life.

The afternoon services took care of themselves —at least they were so arranged by the school superintendents that the preacher had comparatively little to do except preside. He (the preacher) generally occupied a central position, in the midst of rows of forms rising from the floor and crowded with boys and girls—most of them very self-conscious in their new suits and dresses—who sang their anniversary hymns with tremendous energy, and whose dialogues and recitations delighted the perspiring crowds of parents and visitors who had come to hear them.

In spite of the flurry and excitement inseparably associated with these affairs there were great opportunities to be seized at such times by a

preacher who was tactful and alert, and so Arthur endeavoured to make his addresses as suitable for these occasions as he knew how, with his limited experience. He was glad, however, when the anniversary epidemic died down at last, and he was able to devote himself again to his regular ministerial duties.

Early in May the Synod of the Cornish District to which Arthur belonged was held, and this, too, proved a new and instructive experience for him. The only time Arthur had previously attended a Synod was when he had presented himself for examination as a ministerial candidate in his own home district, and, of course, he had not then been a member of the Synod, and had no chance of seeing how its sessions were conducted. Now, of course, he was obliged to attend, and he looked forward with interest to learning all he could concerning the wider outlook on church matters which the Synod would afford.

The May Synod is held, generally, in one of the larger towns included in the geographical area which constitutes the ecclesiastical province of a particular district.

This year, in West Cornwall, Truro was the appointed centre, and Arthur was very interested to visit the quiet substantial old city, and to rub shoulders with ministerial and lay representatives from all the circuits in the western area.

The sessions held in the large hall adjoining the famous St. Mary's chapel proved very absorbing. On the first day only ministers were present. The chairman (really the "episkopos" of the district),

the Rev. John Driver, a particularly able preacher, speaker, and organizer, gave a searchingly spiritual address at the opening of the session, after which special questions relating to ministerial fidelity, character, and effectiveness, were carefully dealt with, and the general condition of spiritual affairs in the district, as reflected by the carefully prepared reports in the printed agenda, was reviewed in anticipation of the larger attendance on the morrow.

"Laymen's Day," was a revelation to Arthur of the strength and resourcefulness of the Methodist Church in this part of the country. Representatives of all types were present. Professional men, farmers, tradesmen, Justices of the Peace, County Councillors, men of wealth, and others rich only in their indisputable spiritual qualifications for the undertaking of church affairs.

What keenness they all displayed, even in the discussion of dry financial details. And what powers of debate were evidenced time and again whenever controversial points arose. It was good to see and hear these men Arthur thought. They were giving the whole day to the affairs of their beloved church. As business men they took up each item on the agenda in the order prescribed by the chairman, and when the session was thrown open for the free expression of views concerning the work of God in its general aspect, how eloquently and pointedly many of them spoke.

Of course there were a few cranks and bores present; what considerable legislative assembly is without them? The chairman, however, "knew

his men," and often a dull or ineffective harangue would be interrupted by a naive remark on his part which would cause the whole Synod to dissolve in roars of laughter.

The members of the Synod lunched together in the Town Hall, the Mayor, and several Anglican and Free-Church Ministers of the City giving brief, hearty speeches of welcome at the close.

Then business again, until tea-time, when crowds of local friends joined the delegates in one of those social "crushes" so dear to the typical "Methodist."

On each evening of the Synod the spacious and historic "St. Mary's" was crowded by the general public, and addresses on live theological and social questions were given by specially qualified ministers of the district, and their speaking was indicative of the high intellectual and oratorical level to which even men of the "rank and file" might attain, providing that their minds were quick to discern "the signs of the times." Arthur enjoyed the Synod thoroughly. It helped to confirm his belief as to the efficiency and spiritual adaptiveness of that section of the Church Universal to which he belonged by birth and by choice.

He was entertained during his stay in a delightful home, with two other young ministers, his host, a prosperous merchant and the members of his family doing all that they possibly could to make the visit of their guests as pleasant as possible.

Arthur was pleased too, to find that he had done well in his examination work, it being reported to the Synod that he had taken first-class honours.

He was glad also to learn that several other probationers had done equally well, and he returned home to Trengwith after this ecclesiastical excursion feeling "thoroughly bucked," and ready for any new adventures that might be awaiting him.

CHAPTER XIV

AMO, AMAS, AMAT

THE "gentle reader," who has patiently perused thus far our simple chronicle of Trengwith happenings, is, no doubt, beginning to wonder when its supreme interest is to culminate; for it has come to be taken for granted by the readers of a story, that, wherever the stage may be set, the central motive of the drama—be it tragedy, comedy, or quiet idyll—*must* be concerned with the fascinating theme of love.

The description of a particular place on the surface of our planet—its scenery, people, social and religious peculiarities, history, archæology, and so forth—is all very interesting as far as it goes; but when, oh when! is the unattached young man going to give full rein to the emotions which circumstances, up to a certain point, have obliged him to keep in check? When, in a word, will he become the *lover* "whom all the world loves" —because he *does* what all the world expects him to do?

A very natural query this, and in harmony with the philosophy which regulates the thought and conduct of so many millions of romantically-inclined human beings.

We hope that nothing we have written so far,

concerning Arthur Willesford's regular clerical routine and intellectual pursuits, has given the impression that his nature was deficient in those elements which make for "romance" in the most significantly understood sense of the word. Arthur was a minister, but he was also a *man*, and it goes without saying that many a time his thoughts had been occupied with speculations and conjectures concerning that great emotional and physical adventure which constitutes the very *raison d'être* of individual and racial existence.

Let us then explain his position.

To say that he had fallen in love with Frances Tresillian in a precipitate whirl of romantic emotion would certainly not be an accurate description of the nature of his feelings towards her.

He had come to Trengwith perfectly heart-free, and had found his work at first entirely engrossing, so that his mind had not been greatly occupied with purely personal interests. That some day he might meet a charming girl and ask her to marry him, had, of course, been a thought at the back of his mind, such as any young fellow might fondly entertain; but the prospect of such a complete merging of his life in that of another had always seemed remote and dream-like. It would be, he had always thought, a tremendous break from known to unknown conditions of life, and he, therefore, owing to a reticence not unusual in young men of his type, had not developed any decided predilection for the society of the opposite sex.

During his college course, and also when spending his vacations at home, he had had the entrée

into many delightful homes, and had met girls of varying types at picnics, tennis, garden-parties, and so forth, but as he was not of a philandering disposition his equanimity had not been disturbed by any devastating encounter in the lists of love.

Arthur and his fellow-students had often felt amused at John Wesley's advice in those quaint and pungent *Twelve Rules of a Helper*, which are painted on a panel in the College Dining Hall, and which are still read impressively once a year in the Pastoral Session of the Synod. This particular rule runs thus :—*Converse sparingly and cautiously with women, particularly with young women.* Well—John Wesley was undoubtedly the greatest evangelist and ecclesiastical organizer whom England, or the world, has ever seen; but, as a guide to young ministers in their relations with members of the fair sex, his excessive caution is certainly discounted by the history of his own unfortunate experiences in this connection.

First there was the "Miss Sophy" of his Georgia days, who kept him all a-quiver with anxiety to do his duty by her as a pastor, and, at the same time, to determine his real relation towards her as a lover; failing unfortunately to secure a mutual satisfaction in both attempts. "Miss Sophy" might have made him a loving and helpful wife if he had not been so cautious in suppressing his feelings when he knew in his heart that he was truly in love with her.

Then there was "Grace Murray," another charmer who also "strangely warmed his heart." *She* would have made him a congenial helpmeet,

but there was a hitch and the affair came to nothing.

The worst of it was that when John Wesley, grown excessively cautious and circumspect, did, on the advice of a clergyman friend, propose to, and marry, a widow lady of wealth and intelligence, "who apparently" (as one biographer says) "had every qualification necessary to render his home-life happy and exemplary," he (John) found that he had caught a fearful tartar, for she developed a monomaniacal jealousy, and after nagging at her husband for twenty years, left him with the assurance (welcome enough no doubt) that she never would return.

We cannot help admiring Wesley's Socratic equanimity on receiving this blow to his domestic life. A laconic entry in his *Journal* sums up the situation very conclusively: "Non eam reliqui, non dimisi, non revocabo."

And that was *that!*

2

Still, in spite of the misfortunes experienced by his patron saint, Arthur Willesford had not been disposed to ignore altogether the advice contained in the rule which had been made for the guidance of those who had chosen a certain mode of life; and the need for such caution had been brought home to him very forcibly from time to time.

There were men in College with him who had made hasty matrimonial engagements which were

bound to be hampering to them later on. They had gone in "at the deep end" before they had really known their own minds, or had mixed enough in social life to realize the qualities which are indispensable in a wife who would have to fill a position requiring a good deal of cleverness and social tact. And, apart from all this, Arthur was sufficiently sensible to be aware of the fact that a true marriage is something very different from a mere "nuptial flight" or a dubious domestic experiment. His attitude towards the whole matter was simply that of normal, healthy-minded youth, cherishing, as youth must ever do, a secret dream as to the possibility of some "sweet and glad surprise" which should, sooner or later, enter into his life and exercise a transforming, uplifting influence upon his whole nature.

And now the course of events had certainly brought him to a point at which it was necessary that he should pause and assure himself as to the real state of his feelings towards Frances Tresillian.

His happy association with the Tresillian family had brought him into closer domestic and intellectual intercourse with this girl than he had ever before enjoyed with a maiden of about his own age. The more he saw of her the more he admired her undeniable gifts and graces. She came from a fine stock, and her charms of face and figure were such as distinguished her as an outstanding example of Cornish beauty—which is saying a great deal.

She had been well grounded in general knowledge, and had a genuine love for fine literature, which Arthur, himself a keen book-lover, greatly

appreciated. Then, too, there was her music, in which she really excelled, and in addition her mother's domestic training had made her so capable that she was quite able to manage all household affairs should Mrs. Tresillian be absent from home.

"Nothing very wonderful about all this," some reader might say.

Perhaps not, but we are simply trying to give some idea of the girl who seemed to Arthur Willesford to possess just the endowments of mind and person that belonged to his dream of what an English maiden was capable of being.

She was a religious girl too, but not in any mere sentimental way. She used no pietistic "jargon," and, indeed, was rather reticent concerning her personal spiritual experiences. But her many quiet, unostentatious acts of service amongst the villagers gave evidence of her sincerity, and she had a class of young girls in the Sunday School, the members of which adored her.

The problem which confronted Arthur, and which bothered him very much when he began to realize that his feelings towards Frances could no longer be regarded as merely those of friendship, was as to whether he had any right to put his fortune to the test.

Every visit he now paid to the Barton deepened his conviction that in this Cornish girl he had met his fate, and the thought of winning her love was the sweetest his mind had ever entertained.

But was he justified at this stage in taking a bold, direct-line towards the realization of his heart's desire? He thought not, for there were

many things to be considered by a man in his position.

Would it be fair, even supposing that he succeeded as a lover, to ask Frances to share the kind of life he had chosen for himself?

To take a girl from such a desirable home as was her's at the Barton, to "travel" through a succession of Methodist Circuits, "pulling up the tent-pegs" at the bidding of Conference every few years, with all the attendant worry and unsettlement which such operations were bound to involve, was, on the face of it, a startling proposition!

Would Mr. and Mrs. Tresillian—whose forebears had been settled securely on their own lands here in Trengwith—would they like their daughter to live such a nomadic life? Would they not prefer a suitor who could give her a solid settlement and an assured position in the County they all loved so dearly?

What about the rumour he had heard concerning Jack Trengrouse?

True, it was *only* a rumour, but the fact remained that such an alliance between two of the oldest families in the neighbourhood would be eminently desirable from many points of view. Then, too, supposing—only supposing—that Frances could come to care for Arthur as he cared for her, their engagement would have to be a longish one, for he was only in his first year of probation, and, according to ministerial rule could not marry until three years had elapsed.

It was all very puzzling, but love is invincibly optimistic, and has often triumphed over far greater

difficulties than these, and so Arthur refused to be daunted by mere considerations of conventional obstacles, and was content to await the course of events with a fair amount of confidence.

For, after all, the life of a minister's wife, providing that she has the same high views of the ministerial vocation as her husband, is one which affords boundless opportunities for the exercise of all the qualities of mind and spirit a woman may possess.

Arthur would not expect his wife to develop into a kind of Methodist "Mrs. Proudie," but he did conceive of her as the star of home-life, and as a willing and efficient comrade in those social and spiritual duties they would have to undertake.

There would, he thought, be no lack of interest in a life which would bring them both into touch with all sorts and conditions of people. Rich and poor alike would welcome them into their homes, and in the course of years all kinds of wonderful friendships would be made.

Children, should they come, would be well provided for educationally, for there are no finer schools in the country than those established for the children of the Manse.

There would be absorbing schemes to tackle in most circuits, apart from the regular programme of religious work. The building of new churches and schools, the organization of Lecture Courses, Bazaars, Concerts, and social functions of all kinds, in connection with many of which a clever woman's brain and helpful tact would be invaluable.

Yes! There *were* points in favour of such a life for a woman, provided she were willing to cut the cable which moored her to an hereditary mode of existence.

It would be a life of constant adventure. Fresh interests would always be presenting themselves, fresh problems would always be clamouring for solution, fresh characters would be for ever trooping on to the stage. The opportunities for studying human nature in all its aspects would be boundless. And in the home-life there would always be books and music to stimulate the mind and refresh the spirit.

Besides, as Arthur was glad to think, there would be in their case at least, no question of anxiety regarding ways and means, for his father had intimated that when the time came he was prepared to augment his son's ministerial allowances in order that he might do his work unhampered by domestic disabilities as related to finance.

So there it was! And there the whole matter must be left for the time. And Arthur, after doing his best to reconcile in his own mind the ideal with the practical, was fain to believe that the Providence who had guided his path thus far on his life-journey, would, in the future, order all things eventually for the best.

CHAPTER XV

FOLKS FROM UP-ALONG

A CHRONICLE like ours must of necessity differ from a novel, in that the latter depends almost entirely upon the ingenuity of its plot. The novelist says to himself, "What characters can I imagine, and what, in certain situations, would they be likely to do and say? How can I sustain the interest of my readers by drawing upon my powers of invention, so that incidents may fit into each other in a truly dramatic sequence, and thus make my story a *tour de force* of imagination?"

The chronicler on the other hand has a homelier task, in that he has not to describe things as they might be, but as they are, or have been. His work, therefore, is bound to lack much of the excitement which the development of a cleverly-conceived plot is likely to produce. But, in spite of his artistic limitations, he is content to see and record aspects of life and character as they are known to him, and he is consoled by the thought that his book is likelier to be re-read than are some possessing far more technical brilliance.

With the summer well advanced Cornwall had opened her arms wide to receive the crowds of tourists and visitors who were eager for the unique

delights which by previous experience, or by hearsay, they knew would be awaiting them in England's western-most County.

They came trooping down from "up-along" with full purses, and with hearts beating high with expectancy. The railway junctions from Plymouth downwards woke up from their usual state of somnolence. The arrival of the famous "Cornish Riviera Express" from Paddington was the crowning daily event. Platforms were strewn with suit-cases, golf-clubs, and holiday gear of every description. Every town and village on the coast of the peninsula, north or south, had its quota of visitors, and Trengwith, as might be expected, though its charms had not yet been boomed on the railway posters, had its full share of summer residents, and those who had never been in the place before were delighted with its loveliness, as yet unspoiled by commercial exploitation.

The people who found their way here were for the most part of a class fully prepared to appreciate a holiday programme free from all artificial excitements and conventions, and who were quite willing to dispense with promenades, pierrots, policemen, and cinemas—especially cinemas—if they might have instead, delicious quiet, and abundant opportunity to enjoy the entrancing natural beauties of the locality.

Artists, of course, were frequent visitors, but of these the villagers were rather shy, as they were supposed (by the labouring-folk) to be somewhat "happy-go-lucky" in their manner of life, for it is always a mystery to the untutored countryman

that a "living wage" can be earned by such apparently puerile work as "picksher paintin'."

"Do many artists come to Trengwith?" Arthur Willesford asked Peter Harris one day.

"Why yes sir, a pretty passel on 'em do belong to come, and most of 'em be dressed up like Merry-Andrews. Awnly t'other day a couple o' Lunnon picksher paintin' chaps was here watchin' the mawers at work. Most of the cuttin' ez done by machinery now, but there's some still as use the scye. Well, Jan Menhinnick was workin' away braäve as he do belong to do, an' wan o' the artises went 'fore an' axed un right out to come an' zit vor'n; but Jan's no fule, an' he heard thik chap zay to his companion: 'He's got a gude haid, an' I must taäke un vor my 'Cademy picksher.'"

"Did he go and sit to the painter as he was requested?" Arthur asked.

"Aw, no sir, he wad'n sich a fule as to go an' have his haid tuk off wi' his awn scye!"

Arthur was delighted about the middle of July to receive a letter from his father saying that he, Arthur's mother, and also his brother Donald, and sister Winifred, had decided to come to Trengwith for the whole of August if rooms could be secured.

Arthur's letters had been so full of enthusiastic descriptions of his Cornish experiences as to give all those at home a keen desire to see something of Cornwall for themselves.

Will, Arthur's eldest brother, would have to superintend the business in his father's absence, but even he cherished the hope of coming later on, perhaps early in September. This was very pleasant

news for the young minister as may be imagined, for he had already arranged with his "Super" that his own holiday should be in August, and he had been allowed to take three weeks off duty, with two Sundays free from preaching appointments. This entire release from all circuit responsibilities would be very welcome, and he would come back to his work with fresh zest after such a good spell of rest and recreation. He rushed out immediately to see what he could do in the way of arranging accommodation for his people in the village, and was quite successful in fixing matters up with Mrs. Penhaligon, who had excellent rooms, and whose cleanliness and culinary gifts were irreproachable. Her house was full at present, but the rooms would be vacant for August, and Arthur booked them forthwith.

He looked in at the Barton on his way back to Mrs. Mann's, in order to tell the Tresillians about his father's plans, and they were all pleased for Arthur's sake, promising to do all in their power towards helping him to give his people a thoroughly good time during their stay.

"I, too, had a letter this morning," said Frances, "so *you* do not monopolize all the exciting news."

"Are you expecting visitors also?"

"Yes, Mr. Willesford, Nancy Mitchell is coming with her father and mother, and they will be our guests during their visit. They wanted us to see about apartments for them, but father and mother wouldn't hear of it as we have plenty of room. Nancy is my dearest girl friend, as you know, and it will be very jolly having her and her

people here. Ever since she went back Nancy has been wild to come again, and she says in her letter that there is no place like Trengwith for her in the wide world, a sentiment which, of course, we appreciate."

"*I* certainly do," Arthur replied, "my love for it increases every day.

"I have written to my college-chum, Frank Wilson, asking him to fix his holiday at the same time as mine, and to come here and spend it. Mrs. Mann has a spare bed-room, and we shall enjoy talking 'shop' with each other; I want him also to bring two of his latest sermons and preach them here on the first Sunday in August (my appointments), and so leave me quite free; very selfish of me, is it not?"

"Not a bit," said Mr. Tresillian, "he will enjoy taking our pulpit, the chapel will be well filled with all these visitors about; he will have a pleasant memory, and you will not be obliged to shut yourself up in your study while your folks are here."

Just after leaving the Barton Arthur met Jack Trengrouse, whose towel-swathed shoulders advertised the fact that he had been for a swim. He, too, seemed very interested when Arthur told him of the August plans, and said that if Arthur would like it he could arrange for some tennis up at Tremellan.

"We have a couple of good courts you know, and we can have some rattling sets. I am quite sure that my people will be only too glad to see you all up, and will suggest the idea to them."

"That *would* be jolly," Arthur said. "I haven't

played yet this season, but can soon get back to form with a little practice. Miss Tresillian and Nancy Mitchell are 'hot-stuff' I understand in the tennis line. Wilson plays a clinking game, and my brother and sister are pretty fair performers."

"Well," remarked Jack, "if Nancy Mitchell can handle a racket as well as she does her fiddle-bow, we shall have hard work to keep her in her place. Her playing at the Old Cornwall Concert was tip-top; I often think of it with pleasure."

"I feel sure you will find that she is an extremely good tennis player," Arthur assured him, "I have heard Miss Tresillian say so."

"Oh well, we shall find out presently—the sooner the better, and, I say Willesford, there are plenty of other things we can arrange with all these people coming to Cornwall—and some of them for the first time. We can't have concerts and plays at this season of the year, but we *can* rush 'em round a bit, and manage to give them a few adventures such as ordinary visitors to the County might be likely to miss."

"What, for instance?" Arthur inquired.

"Why, one night we can all go seine-fishing for bass by moonlight, and some day we could explore the big seal-cavern in the north cliffs. I have done it once and it was jolly exciting. It is a difficult place to get at, but the thing is well worth doing.

"Then, of course, we can get up plenty of excursions to places well out of the beaten track, which I am sure they would all enjoy."

"It will be delightful," said Arthur, "and we

shall be grateful to you for any help you can give us in arranging our programme."

The last two weeks of July passed very pleasantly, and Arthur managed to salve his pastoral conscience, in the absence of really pressing duties, by visiting many out-lying farmsteads which were difficult to reach in the winter months. He was heartily welcomed everywhere, for now that he was well-known throughout the neighbourhood much of the shyness and reserve which characterize Cornish farm-folk in the presence of "strangers" had vanished, and the young "praicher" was allowed all the liberties and privileges of a trusted friend. There was no need to show him into the "best parlour," for he preferred the kitchen, with its wholesome smell of baking, its pendant hams, its grandfather-clock, its brass ornaments and inevitable china dogs on the mantel-piece, and the long table with its deep window-seat where he loved to sit and be one with the family at the meals he was so often invited to share.

Later on he might have charge of a suburban church, and would be expected to attend "afternoon teas" and eat cucumber sandwiches and confectioner's "fancies," but just now he would not have changed his lot voluntarily for that of the best-placed minister in Methodism, for in all probability he might never again have such a favourable opportunity of getting to understand "Arcady," in all its phases of work and faith.

The Cornish dialect, too, intrigued him more and more, and increasing familiarity with it led him to appreciate the "fossil history" that lay embedded

in many of the archaic terms which were in constant use in the vernacular of the country-side.

He enjoyed, too, the humorous proverbs and quaint phrases which were so often upon the lips of his Cornish friends, and the note-book he had started soon after coming to Trengwith for the recording of his impressions of a country and people hitherto strange to him, began to fill up with all sorts of interesting matter relating to dialect, folk-lore, customs, legends, superstitions, and so forth, which would prove invaluable to him if ever he should be moved to write about, or lecture upon, his Cornish studies and experiences. Time spent in the manner described was certainly not wasted, and Arthur's pleasant pastoral rambles helped to fill up the fortnight which lay between the date on which he had received his father's letter, and that on which he expected his people to arrive.

Frank Wilson had replied accepting Arthur's invitation, and intimating that he was quite prepared to preach at Trengwith on the first Sunday in August, on one condition, namely, that Arthur should visit *his* circuit on some future occasion and render similar service. Everything, therefore, was shaping well, and on the last Friday in July, which was also the last day of that month, Arthur cycled up to Gwavas Road Station, to meet the afternoon express.

It *was* jolly to be able to welcome his own folk, and to know that he had so many pleasures in store for them. Frank Wilson had travelled in the same carriage with them. He had brought his cycle, fortunately, for he would find it very useful.

Peter Harris, and the famous waggonette in which Arthur had made his first entrance into Trengwith eleven months ago, were in waiting, and Mr. and Mrs. Willesford, Donald and Winifred, drove down in it, Arthur and Frank cycling slowly behind, whilst William Mann's donkey-cart, in charge of a tow-headed boy, brought along the luggage.

They all had tea together at Mrs. Penhaligon's, after which they rambled out over the towans, and were rewarded with a magnificent sunset, retiring to their respective lodgings full of high anticipations regarding the many holiday delights which the coming month was to bring.

CHAPTER XVI

HALCYON DAYS

CORNWALL has become so popular of late years that its general attractions are well known to multitudes, and descriptions of its most famous beauty-spots fill every guide-book.

We therefore omit all detailed accounts of the more distant excursions by rail, coach, and cycle, undertaken by the Trengwith holiday-group, in order to visit the chief places of interest in the western corner of the County.

These were greatly enjoyed, for the weather was perfect, and the views indescribably lovely, but we are bound to confess that those days brought the keenest pleasures which entailed no travelling, and which were spent in Trengwith itself, or in its immediate vicinity.

There seemed to be everything here which met the holiday moods of everybody in the party; for the essential elements of delight for which Cornwall is noted, found a focus within a three-mile radius, and the new-comers never grew tired of the wonderful undulating towans—with their sandy hills and hollows, crisp turf, and quivering rushes; the wide-flung beaches—flashing back the sunlight so gloriously; the rock-pools—lying crystal-clear amidst the huge boulders on the shore; the towering

cliffs—full of mysterious, echoing caverns; the ever-changing panoramic effects caused by sun and cloud; the "multitudinous laughter" of the Atlantic—now on its very best behaviour; the—the—*everything!* For who can really express in words the essence of that elusive charm which is produced by the perfect combination of so many contributory elements?

It was no wonder that those who had never spent a holiday in such an environment before should find the days flash by far too quickly, for Trengwith is an ideal place for lovers to dream in, and also where weary souls may seek a healing balm from those cares and anxieties which find an entrance even into the most sheltered and best-regulated lives.

Frank Wilson preached twice in Trengwith Chapel on the first Sunday, and gave "great satisfaction," as the sermon-tasting phrase has it. Coming as he did from a busy Midland town he much enjoyed the change of preaching in his friend's village pulpit, and Arthur was proud to hear from visitors and natives how thoroughly Frank's services were appreciated.

Not all who visit the Duchy of Cornwall really get to the very centre of things. That blest experience is reserved for those who are fortunate enough to be received into the actual home-life of the Cornish folk, but it goes without saying that Arthur's visitors, and the Mitchells, were all right in that respect, for barriers were down everywhere, and "the freedom of the village" was theirs for the taking.

Arthur's brother, Donald, had just left school at the age of sixteen, after passing the "London Matric." He had decided to be a doctor, and would be commencing his medical course in the coming autumn. Meanwhile he was just the jolly, emancipated schoolboy—ready for any fun that might be going.

Winifred Willesford, a very pretty girl, with a methodical mind, and a special gift for what is now styled "domestic science," was her mother's right-hand at home; but it seemed pretty evident that she and Frank Wilson were likely to "make a match of it," though nothing definite had as yet been announced. Frank had been coming to the Willesfords' home for vacation visits ever since the commencement of his friendship with Arthur, and had had plenty of opportunities of noting Winifred's many fine traits of character, whilst Winifred had liked Frank from the very first, so that this Trengwith visit was an ideal arrangement as far as these two were concerned.

The vicar called on Mr. and Mrs. Willesford soon after they were settled at Mrs. Penhaligor's, and said many kind things about Arthur, not forgetting, however, to express his regret that he (Arthur) was not "in the church."

"But he *is!*" Mr. Willesford exclaimed.

"Our view of churchmanship is divergent, as no doubt he has told you?"

"He speaks most highly of you, Mr. Russell, and greatly values your friendship, and as for his churchmanship, it is quite sound I take it, for he has had plenty of opportunities for studying the

whole question—historically and scripturally—and feels, I am assured, absolutely satisfied with regard to his position."

"Still I can't help wishing that he was one of *us*," Mr. Russell said, rather wistfully. "He would do fine spiritual work as an Anglican clergyman."

"So he will do, I trust, as a Methodist minister," replied Mr. Willesford, with a smile.

"It seems to me," he added, "that the whole subject needs to be looked at afresh in our day, in the hope of arriving eventually at a satisfactory solution of the many spiritual and political difficulties which have produced so much sectarian bitterness in the past.

"I shan't forget," Mr. Willesford went on, "some striking words I once heard from the lips of the great leader of Liberal Evangelicalism, Hugh Price-Hughes, in which he summed up the question of 'churchmanship,' as those outside the State Church, ought, in his judgment, to understand it.

"We have used," he said, "negative terms too long—'Protestant,' 'Nonconformist,' 'Dissenter.' These are terms which denote what we are *not*, what we *will* not, what we *do* not; but the time has come for a more positive declaration: What *are* we?

"We are Churchmen—Free Evangelical Churchmen, above all *High Churchmen*—so high that we cannot think of allowing politicians to appoint our ministers or Parliament to manipulate our creeds."

"But there," Mr. Willesford concluded, "I am only a plain layman, and am not skilled in ecclesiastical subtleties; I understand that you and my son have been thrashing out some of the points at issue, and that although you cannot quite see eye to eye with regard to certain matters of Church Order, you are yet one in 'charity'—and that means much, does it not?"

The vicar cordially assented, and Mr. Willesford went on to tell him an amusing story about a recent civic function in his own town, which was presided over by the mayor, a kindly, but not highly educated man.

The platform was representative of the whole religious life of the town; the rector was there, the Roman Catholic priest, the Wesleyan and Congregational ministers, and the captain of the Salvation Army.

"Ah, my friends!" said the smiling Mayor, "this is as it should be. If folks have got the grace of God in their hearts, it don't matter very much what *sex* they belong to!"

Mr. Russell laughed heartily at this oratorical climax, and told Mr. Willesford that he had found the expression of his ecclesiastical opinions very interesting. He was, however, he said, too deeply rooted in his own particular tenets to be seriously disturbed by opposing theories, and should continue to work and pray for the salvation of England, and the world, on the lines laid down by the great leaders of Anglo-Catholicism.

2

The entrance of the younger members of the party put an end to the discussion. Jack Trengrouse had come down from Tremellan with a cordial invitation from the Squire and his wife for all who would like to come up that afternoon for tennis. He had been to the Barton and Frances and Nancy had accepted ; would the others come ?

" Rather," said Arthur, " we shall be delighted. Father and mother, of course, will want their usual afternoon nap, I know, but all the rest of us are very keen. We will be up soon after three o'clock, and we feel very grateful to you for fixing the appointment up for us! "

" Oh, that's all right," Jack replied heartily, " there's some selfishness at the back of it, for I'm anxious to find out exactly where I am in the tennis-line, with all you experts about, so please get up as soon as you can, and we'll have a good 'go in!' "

After lunch the young folks started off in high spirits for Tremellan Hall. The three girls looked charming in their pretty tennis frocks, and the young men, in their immaculate flannels and college blazers, made, as Mrs. Mann remarked as she saw them off her premises, " A fine braäve show."

On the way through the village street Arthur was stopped by John Trewhella, who had never seen his minister in tennis-rig before, and who was evidently rather disturbed by his decidedly worldly appearance.

" What is it, Mr. Trewhella ? " Arthur asked.

John's answer was both sententious and scriptural:—"And they sent the coat of many colours to their father, and said, *This have we found: know now, whether it be thy son's coat or no?*"

He passed on without further remark, but evidently intended to convey the idea that if "Conference" could only catch a glimpse of Arthur's unwontedly gay attire awkward questions would be asked.

The tennis at Tremellan was delightful. The courts were in perfect order, and the quality of the play excellent. In one set Arthur and Frances were opposed by Jack and Nancy. Frances played with rare style and judgment, she had a raking serve, and her placing was remarkably good. She and Arthur won the first game (six—three); but their opponents, pulling themselves together, won the next (six—four); and in the last game Arthur failed to support his partner as he should have done, making a good many double-faults, and missing sundry good chances of volleying. In consequence they lost the set, Jack and Nancy evidently feeling well-pleased with themselves over the victory.

Arthur was vexed to have let his partner down, but Frances laughed at him for taking the beating so seriously. "We have had a splendid game," she said, "and we shall lower their colours yet, so cheer up Mr. Willesford! Remember Sir Richard Grenville and the 'Revenge!' 'We shall live to fight again, and to strike another blow!'"

How delightful it all was, Arthur thought—win or lose! Could any young people in the

world be having a better time than they were? Here on these lovely lawns, with the grey old mansion in the back-ground, embowered in summer greenery—the welcome guests of kindly Cornish gentle-folk, whose family record could be traced far back into the archives of the County; it was "simply topping,"—that was the most expressive phrase Arthur's mental vocabulary could supply at the moment, and it had to suffice.

Tea was brought out presently by the butler, the Squire and Mrs. Trengrouse, with a few friends who were visiting at the Hall, joining the group of players for this pleasant interlude, and remaining to witness the games which followed, after which Mrs. Trengrouse took the girls into the house for a rest, while the men-folk enjoyed a stroll around the gardens, and inspected the stables with the Squire.

On leaving the young people thanked their host and hostess for their delightful hospitality, and were told that the courts would be at their service whenever they felt inclined to use them.

The trek home-along was by no means the least pleasant part of the day's programme. Jack Trengrouse seemed very keen to walk back to Trengwith with his visitors, and paired off with his late tennis partner. Winifred and Frank, as might have been expected, elected to keep together. Donald Willesford, being a youth possessing a considerable amount of *nous*, made himself scarce, and so Arthur found himself carrying Frances Tresillian's racket and shoes, realizing with a thrill that this was the first time in their acquaintance

that they had walked any distance in each other's company.

Surely his star was in the ascendant, but not for worlds would he have taken any undue advantage of the high privilege which was being accorded him.

They did not talk much as they crossed the park. Passing through the lodge-gates they struck the road leading down into the valley, and entered a solemn aisle of greenery, where the foliage was so dense that the path could only be dimly discerned.

How cool and quiet it was in this færy-haunted glade! How delicious the scent of dog-rose and honey-suckle!

They heard the others on before them, talking gaily about the experiences of the afternoon, but their own remarks were few. It was enough, Arthur thought, to *be* here—in Cornwall, with the very flower of Cornish girls at his side.

Emerging presently from the woodlands they saw before them the lovely Coombe, bathed in the rosy light of the westering sun. They crossed the stepping-stones spanning the stream which babbled through the "Garrack," passed the silent mill, with a "good-night" to old Miller Tape, who was leaning over a gate smoking his pipe, arriving only too soon at the Barton, where they found the advance-guard giving Mr. and Mrs. Tresillian an account of their adventures.

Arthur seized the opportunity of thanking Jack Trengrouse privately for his kind offices in arranging such a delightful programme, but Jack declared that he needed no thanks, and that "the fun was only just beginning!"

3

Jack Trengrouse was as good as his word with regard to the exploration of the seal-cavern in the north cliffs. A day was appointed and the donkey-cart was commandeered to convey the provisions and various items of gear considered necessary for the undertaking. Dr. and Mrs. Hawking had been invited to come and they turned up early, in time to start from Trengwith with the rest of the party.

It was a glorious picnic from beginning to end. They all lunched amidst the heather on the cliffs, with magnificent views to inspire them, and what a lunch it was! Arthur had asked Mrs. Mann to make pasties enough to go all round. Mrs. Penhaligon had baked piles of "splits" and saffron buns. Mrs. Tresillian was responsible for chickens, tongue, salad, etc. Mrs. Mitchell had arranged for cream, sweets, and dessert. The need for the donkey-cart became apparent as the ladies laid out this gargantuan repast.

The older members of the party decided not to descend the cliff, but settled down with books and papers to spend the afternoon where they were. The young people then commenced their quest for the seal-cave under Jack Trengrouse's guidance, and plenty of excitement and interest came their way.

How thrilling it was to look over the cliff-edge and get a glimpse of "Hell-a-pit"—that fearsome chasm, inaccessible to climbers, where sea-birds dwelt in such prodigious numbers. Herring-

gulls, guillemots, razor-bills, puffins, oyster-catchers, cormorants—they were all there, to say nothing of the jackdaws and other smaller birds; it was really a liberal education in marine ornithology, and what a row they made, simply because a few young people had ventured near their lone retreat! It was unreasonable, to say the least of it!

"There's a seal!" said Jack suddenly, and sure enough, some distance out, the head of one could be seen curiously prospecting above the surface of the sea. Presently it was joined by another, and Jack, who had brought a rifle with him, could not resist trying a shot, which, to the delight of the girls, had no result whatever, except to cause the pretty creatures to dive and come up again later in a spot far from where the bullet had struck the water.

The way into the seal-cavern was through a narrow tunnel in the side of the cliff (evidently an ancient mine-adit). Candles were lighted, and the party proceeded in single-file along the alley, enjoying the novelty and mystery of their surroundings.

"Careful now, everybody!" Jack shouted. And indeed there was need, for they had reached a place where the path ceased, and thirty feet below lay the floor of the cave they were seeking. The girls, athletic though they were, could not manage the descent, but Jack had provided a rope-ladder, which a farm-hand from Tremellan had carried, and now fixed so securely that all the men of the party were able to get down.

It was a weird, dim spot, and at one time

Jack assured them it had been a noted haunt of smugglers. A great bank of shingle sloped down to the sandy beach beyond, and here the seals love to lie and sun themselves, but to-day none were in evidence.

However, it was something to have penetrated to this secluded retreat, and the wonderful strangeness of their surroundings made up for the lack of "sport." Jack had to be content with firing off his rifle, which made a terrific noise in the confined and echoing interior of the cave, and they all revelled in the entrancing glimpses of sea and sand, seen against the over-arching masses of rock which guarded the entrance to the cavern.

One by one the explorers climbed the ladder and rejoined the girls, who, it must be confessed, were glad to emerge at last into the warm sunshine which flooded the world outside.

Tea was waiting for them when they returned hungry and thirsty to their rendezvous amidst the heather. And how it was enjoyed! What jokes were made! What stories told! The whole day had been crowded with rare delights, and would long be remembered by every member of the party as one of the happiest and most interesting that they had ever spent.

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CHAPTER XVII

WORK AND DREAMS

HARVEST was now well advanced, and visitors and natives alike found the days pass only too swiftly. The farmers and their men were keen on getting in their crops of wheat and barley while the spell of fine weather lasted, and the harvest-field, with its cutting, binding, and carrying operations, was a constant attraction to the visitors: for agricultural scenes and activities always possess a great fascination for those whose life, in the main, is occupied by tasks of a less picturesque kind than those which have to do with human labour in its direct relations with Nature.

Arthur, Frank Wilson, Jack, Donald, and several other volunteers, spent most of their mornings in helping the harvesters, and won many compliments on account of the unexpected powers of endurance which they displayed.

The event of the "vorenoon" was, of course, the appearance of "Miss Frances," and her attendant nymphs, Nancy and Winifred, who came out from the Barton with "crowst" at eleven o'clock. Great slices of saffron-cake, bread and cheese,

mugs of tea poured from a big pitcher, were welcomed and consumed with enthusiasm by the hungry workers, who were glad to slack off a bit and enjoy a brief rest and chat before tackling their jobs again.

"This is perfectly idyllic," said Frank, on one of these occasions, as they lay back luxuriously on a pile of newly-bound sheaves, and watched the girls returning with their empty baskets. "What a delightful collection of pictures I am storing up in my mind to cheer me later on. You country-dwellers are greatly to be envied. Life down here in Trengwith seems so simple, and yet so spacious and satisfying. I shall find it hard to get into town ways after all this freedom."

"Yes, it *is* delightful," Arthur replied, "but you must remember, Frank, that this is August, the very 'Crown of the Year,' and that just now you are seeing country-life in its most pleasing and generous aspects. When winter comes, much that is 'idyllic,' from the holiday-maker's point of view, is bound to disappear; but for my own part I shall always be thankful to have had experience of country-life in *all* its moods and phases, and I am sure that my ministry will be all the better in quality because of it."

"Can't you fancy us, twenty years or so on?" Frank exclaimed. "Two portly 'Supers,' with a tendency to baldness—much worried about 'plan-making' and the filling in of connexional schedules—presidents of this, that, and the other organizations—smothered under all kinds of 'Circuit

Business,' hardly able to get time in which to make a decent sermon? Such days as these will seem like dreams to us then, won't they?"

"What a pessimistic forecast, Frank," cried Arthur. "Don't take it for granted that this is to be our fate. For my part I mean to dream as long as I can. *Always*, if possible. Someone has said, Goethe I think, that 'The truly great man is compounded of the dreamer and the worker,' and the thought appeals to me strongly.

"I admit," he continued, "that heavier responsibilities will come to us with the years, and I have no illusion as to the ministry being a bed of roses. We both know that the superintendency of a big circuit must of necessity mean the mastery of dry details, if the machinery is to run smoothly. But cheer up, old chap! Such work will not be ours for many a long day, so let us make the best of our comparative freedom, and continue to enjoy the romantic side of things as long as we can."

"Well, you always have been a bit of a dreamer," Frank acknowledged, "we elected you to the office of 'College Poet' on that account. Perhaps I shall make a better 'Super' than you, Arthur, when the time comes, for I am much more matter-of-fact than you are. Still, there's a lot in that saying you quoted just now about 'Dreamers and Workers'; it seems to be sound philosophy."

"It is the *only* philosophy for one who wishes to count for something, and to get the very best out of life," Arthur replied. "I don't intend, if I can help it, to become a mere ministerial drudge.

I mean to work, and to work hard, but I simply won't develop into a clerical 'hustler,' for this would be to lose the calmness of spirit, depth of thought, and breadth of vision, which are necessary if one's ministry is to be of abiding value."

"That's the stuff to give the troops," laughed Frank. "I hope you'll be able to live up to this high level; but we've been sitting here vapouring long enough, and they want workers, not dreamers, here in the harvest-field."

"Quite so," answered Arthur, firing a parting shot as he prepared to go on with his job of piling sheaves in readiness for the wagons which were coming for their fresh loads.

"The harvest needs labourers, and efficient ones, but if there had been no *dream* of harvest twelve months ago, there would be nothing to garner *now*. So my philosophy works out all right you see. The dreamer *must* precede the worker, and when the workers are inclined to give themselves airs, and to imagine themselves the all-important people, then, I venture to remind them of the part played by the Dreamer:

"Shading eyes with hands
Who peers into the future of the Race,
And sees bright visions of what is to be."

"We'll make you President of the Conference, my lad, in forty years' time," prophesied Frank, "and you can work all this into your inaugural address. I am sure everybody will sit up and take notice. Meanwhile, let us as humble toilers

on the land do our best toward getting this field cleared, for to-night I hear we are all of us to go to the beach for the bass-fishing."

2

When the corn is in the shock, the fish are on the rock. So runs the Cornish saying, and its truth is borne out by the fact that many good hauls of various kinds are made about harvest-time. Already the "Jewsters" had been to Trengwith with their carts full of pilchards, two or three of which in the form of "scrowlers" make a breakfast fit for an epicure.

The pilchard is a great boon to Cornish cottagers, on account of its cheapness and the nutritious qualities which it possesses. It is really a *sardine*, and the fish bearing that name which are imported from the Continent are immature pilchards, or, at any rate a smaller species of the pilchard family. Thousands of hogsheads of cured pilchards are exported annually to the Mediterranean, but the Cornish folk get their full share of this delectable fish, and the house-wives make a speciality of the "scrowlers," which are prepared by splitting the fish, salting and peppering them liberally, and then skewering them—a dozen or so at a time—on a piece of stick, and letting them dry for a day or two in the sun. The drift-net fishing for pilchards begins about August and goes on until the following April.

Mrs. Mann saw to it that her "young praichers"

should sample a "scrowler" or two at the earliest opportunity, and Arthur and Frank assured her that it was worth while coming to Cornwall, if only to enjoy this particular delicacy.

"Iss," said Mrs. Mann, "they'm beauties they be—reg'lar thick-back beauties, an' fat as grass, an' only six a penny. We shan't 'scat,' as long as us can get good savoury vittles so cheap as they be!"

"Ambrosial diet, I call it," said Frank.

"Well, I don't know what *that* do main," Mrs. Mann answered, "but you've had 'em fried, an' I be goin' to *marinate* some more for your tay, an' when you've had *they* you'll be prapperly haived up 'pon end!"

The much talked of bass-fishing adventure was one having to do with a larger and scarcer denizen of the deep than the homely and prodigal pilchard. It is a salmon-like fish, in colour darkly blue above, and silvery-white beneath. It may be caught with a trolling-rod with sand-eel bait, and has been known to rise to the fly. But this kind of fishing, though it provides very exciting sport for the solitary angler, rarely results in a very heavy bag, and the proposed seine-net trial on Trengwith beach promised, if all went well, to bring *Pera Labrax* in gratifying quantities into the local larders.

At eight o'clock on this appointed evening the whole holiday-group assembled at the Barton. Jack Trengrouse, of course, was there, and the Squire himself had ridden down in order that he might accompany the older members of the party.

The girls were quite ready for this fresh adventure, and soon the start was made.

"The tide is just on the turn," said Jack, "and that is the very best time for bass in this kind of fishing. We shall have good luck I feel sure."

It was a cool evening with a pearl-grey sky. A thin crescent-moon gleamed faintly through a lace-like veil of mist. The towans seemed very eerie and silent now, the sand-hills assuming grotesque shapes as they were viewed against the lingering western-glow.

Godfrey Light sent a glittering lane of beams athwart the waves in its periodic revolution, and the murmur of the receding tide sounded hollow and sad, as if the grey old sea were weary with its age-long ebbing and flowing, and craved for an eternal rest.

Arthur, who was walking again with Frances Tresillian, called her attention to the sound, and said that it reminded him of the closing lines of Hawker's *Quest of the Sangraal.*

"I don't know them," said Frances. "Can you repeat them?"

"Yes," Arthur replied, and then quoted from the poem:

"He ceased: and all around was dreamy night.
There stood Dundagel, throned: and the great sea
Lay, a strong vassal at his master's gate,
And, like a drunken giant, sobb'd in sleep."

"They are indeed fine lines," said Frances, "and they are very expressive of the spirit of

mystery which broods so persistently over our Cornish coast."

It seemed easier to talk to-night than when they returned together from the tennis-party at Tremellan, and as they went along they chatted on many other congenial topics—at least for a time; for presently the path along the cliff-edge became difficult to follow in the dim light, and care was necessary in order to avoid danger.

At last the appointed place was reached. From the top of the cliff they could see black figures below them upon the beach moving actively to-and-fro, and busily preparing the seine. There were about a dozen men and youths altogether, several of them being old hands at the game, the rest enthusiastic novices.

"This way!" Jack Trengrouse shouts to the newly-arrived contingent of visitors, and in single file the whole party descend the precipitous path leading to the beach.

The fishermen are just beginning to wade out into the sea, the two foremost, Cap'n Penfound and Jim Penhaligon, holding upright between them a pole to which one end of the long seine-net is fastened.

Out they go, further and further still, leaving behind them a bobbing line of corks to mark the outline of the net. At last they stop, the water being now breast-high, and commence the return journey, the net now describing a wide half-circle.

The men holding the other pole, close to the edge of the sea, await their arrival, and when the cast is complete all hands begin to haul the net

ashore. Great excitement prevails as, hand-over-hand the slack is drawn in, but, alas, the first cast is a blank. Another attempt is made, and the result is again *nil;* but the third time good-luck attends the effort, and ten noble fish, gleaming like silver bars, are drawn leaping and flopping lustily upon the beach.

Heartened by this success the ardent sportsmen sally out again, and are rewarded by another fine haul. Again and again the process is repeated, with varying results, until the sack is heavy with its glittering burden, and the waders can no longer stand out against the chilling water.

It goes without saying that the young men belonging to the party of visitors were not long in joining the bare-legged brigade whose help was required for the frequent hauling operations. To those who had never taken part in such an adventure before the whole scene was full of charm. How strange and mysterious everything seemed on this quiet beach in West Cornwall! The lights of St. Ina, across the bay, gleamed like the illuminations of a distant fairy city!

Arthur had never known the sea calmer than it was to-night. The beach was being gently looped with lace-like festoons of ripples, while further out the quiet waters glanced and darkled under the mystic magic of the moon.

How lovely it was to be here, with this group of kindred spirits; revelling in the mystery and simplicity of Nature; entirely satisfied with what the place and the hour provided as matter for profitable pre-occupation.

How far removed seemed everything connected with the ordinary every-day world, in its usual chattering, commercial, conventional aspects! Artificial excitements were absent, but instead there was the deep and satisfying consciousness of a complete harmony with the very soul of the universe.

The whole thing was undefinable, Arthur reflected; but what is mere *expression* if only the rarest spiritual feelings may be experienced? He would give up all painful attempts to put the poetry of this Cornish night-scene into articulate form, and simply let its calm beauty do its perfect work in his mind and spirit.

But it was getting late and a move homewards must reluctantly be made. The older folk had already gone. The young people followed, and having negotiated the stiff climb up the cliff without mishap, made what they thought was a "bee-line" for the village. But walking on the towans at night is no easy matter. Ere you know it you have stumbled over a clump of reeds, or dropped into a deep sandy hollow. What fun it was! Surely "they dratted piskies" must have been abroad that August evening, putting all sorts of obstacles in the young folk's way, for the time it took for these to get back to the Barton would never be believed!

At last, however, the lights of the Barton were seen, and that desirable haven being safely reached, it was found that Mrs. Tresillian, with characteristic foresight, had provided refreshment for "one and all," after which it seemed only right to end up the

evening with music. Nancy got out her fiddle, and Frances and she delighted the company with some of their choicest pieces; everybody was happy, and, as Frank said to Arthur when they came away together, "It must be admitted that for pure enjoyment bass-fishing on Trengwith sands at night (together with the etceteras) is jolly hard to beat!"

CHAPTER XVIII

A BOLT FROM THE BLUE

ON the second Sunday of Arthur Willesford's vacation, the Rev. John Fairweather, Superintendent of the St. Penza Circuit, took the services at Trengwith, the pulpit being supplied on the third Sunday by a cultured layman of connexional fame, who was spending his holiday at St. Penza, and who had expressed a wish to preach in one of the circuit chapels.

The young probationer much enjoyed the opportunities thus afforded him of attending public worship simply as a member of the congregation, with no anxiety as to the conduct of the services. For eleven months he had been on constant duty, and now he was glad to be silent, and to hear others speak.

As Arthur listened to the excellent discourses delivered by Frank Wilson, and the two other holiday supplies, he could not but feel re-assured as to the unique opportunities which a preacher has of influencing all sorts and conditions of people in the highest and most spiritual way.

He felt glad, indeed, that he had seen the vision, and heard the call. With the memory of his own first year's work in mind, he would never dream

now of adopting any other line of life than that which appealed to him so strongly. He had had his "poor times" in the pulpit, like all other preachers, but he knew of no greater delight than that afforded by the consciousness of possessing a timely spiritual message for his people—a message so dominating his own soul and intellect as to render its public declaration with freedom and effect a most exhilarating exercise. Like other preachers too, whose hearts are in their work, he had been greatly cheered from time to time by learning, directly or indirectly, that certain sermons of his had proved specially helpful to individual hearers, bringing comfort to sad hearts, shedding light on intellectual difficulties, or sounding a warning note, or one of encouragement at a critical juncture in some one's personal spiritual history.

What vocation could compare with this in interest? Arthur asked himself. How was it possible to come closer to the central facts of human nature than a preacher could? Critics of the pulpit might say what they liked, but the fact would remain that the average man is peculiarly susceptible to a sincere religious appeal, if the circumstances under which it is made are really timely and appropriate.

Then, too, not only the world of men, but the world of Knowledge was the preacher's "Parish" —History, Philosophy, Poetry, Science, Politics even—all these were his to explore and utilize in order that his message might gain in fulness, beauty, accuracy, and intellectual authority.

What a fascinating life of private study alternating with public activity, was that to which he felt increasingly drawn. There was, he thought, no more direct and telling impact to be made upon the intellectual and moral life of a community than that which might be made by an adequately equipped and intensely earnest προφητης, or "spokesman for God"—keenly sensitive to the miseries of human existence, alive to its joys and desirable opportunities, and quick to discern and interpret the signs of the times.

2

But how swiftly the days were passing. Already Arthur's people were beginning to speak of their return journey. Frank Wilson left at the end of his "ministerial fortnight," declaring that he had never spent a more delightful holiday. The fact that his engagement to Winifred had received the sanction of her parents had made him extremely happy, and he had gone back to his work in good heart, with a "top-hole" estimation of Trengwith as a place affording the finest opportunities for settling one's intimate affairs.

The morning after Frank's departure Jack Trengrouse called to see Arthur at his lodgings. He seemed tremendously excited, and after lighting a cigarette in rather a nervous pre-occupied mannner he exclaimed, "I've come for your congrats; Willesford, old man, I'm engaged—to the finest girl in the world."

Arthur's heart sank. It had happened then! Rumour had been right for once! It meant the crashing of all his hopes, but he would play the game, and pulling himself together, he said, as calmly as he could, "I do indeed congratulate you Jack, and I hope that you and Frances Tresillian will be very, very happy."

"Frances Tresillian? My dear fellow, what do you mean? It's Nancy Mitchell that I'm engaged to. I was bowled over at first sight, and since I have got to know her intimately I am absolutely sure that she is the one and only girl for me."

We can imagine Arthur's delight and relief at this unexpected announcement. Never in his life had he felt so deeply agitated as in that moment when he had unexpectedly concluded that his love for Frances was in vain. *Now* he must no longer hesitate to let her know the real state of his feelings. Prudence and caution are excellent virtues up to a certain point, but when love has taken possession of a man's whole being other considerations must, in the very nature of things, give place to the heart's imperious desire.

Jack continued to babble on in the manner usual with newly-accepted lovers, but much of what he was saying sounded in Arthur's ears "like noises in a swoon."

"She's a topping all-round girl, Willesford. Father and mother were surprised, of course, when I told them that I had fallen in love with Nancy, but they can't help seeing that we are made for each other, and on the whole they seem very pleased

to think that my mind is so absolutely made up with regard to her."

"She is indeed a charming and brilliant girl," Arthur said, "and will make you a splendid wife. I never congratulated any one with greater heartiness on an engagement than I do you at this moment."

Jack beamed, of course, at this statement, which was perfectly true, although he could hardly be expected to know its deep underlying meaning.

But Arthur was quite sincere as regards the engagement of Jack and Nancy. Jack was, as we have already gathered, a fine, straightforward, sport-loving young Englishman, not "high-brow" certainly, but with no mean vices, heir to a noble property, and likely to take his place in County affairs with credit in course of time.

Nancy Mitchell was an only daughter. Her father had retired from business in the City of London several years ago and was a wealthy man, although he was averse to the display and extravagance which often advertize the possession of riches. Nancy's education had been of the very best, and had followed the same general lines at "Queenshurst" as those which have been described in a former chapter. In temperament she was somewhat more volatile than her friend Frances Tresillian, but underneath her habitual gaiety of manner there was a fineness of character which would undoubtedly find its full development in the coming years of happy wedded life. Her musical talent had been encouraged in every way.

She had had the very best teachers, and her violin technique was of first-rate quality. She had not run to seed artistically either, but, like Frances Tresillian, had a decided aptitude for domestic details; so, really, Arthur Willesford was quite right in telling Jack Trengrouse that he was a very fortunate fellow.

"What a month this has been," Jack exclaimed. "We have had a 'top-hole' time and no mistake, and to think of it ending up like this."

He was off again, and Arthur was preparing himself to listen to a fresh outburst of rhapsody on the accepted suitor's part, when a knock came to the door and Mrs. Mann entered with a telegram.

"Jimmy Bluett's a-brought un up-along, sir," she said, as she handed it over rather gingerly.

"I can't abide these yaller envelopes. They come so suddint, an' do make any one's innards all of a wommle, wonderin' what gashly noos they do bring."

Arthur wasted no time in opening the envelope and reading the message. He expected no "bolt from the blue" on this tranquil August morning, but one had certainly come, for as he read his face flushed, and then—to use Mrs. Mann's expression in afterwards describing the young minister's appearance—"He went ter'ble white about the gills."

"What is it, Willesford?" cried Jack anxiously. "May we know or is it a private matter?"

"It means 'good-bye' to Trengwith," Arthur faltered out.

"Whatever do you mean?"

"Why, simply this, that I've got my marching-orders from the President of the Conference. Listen." And he read the message.

MINISTER RECENTLY APPOINTED THIRD MAN TRINITY CHURCH WANSGROVE CIRCUIT SECOND LONDON DISTRICT UNABLE TO GO SERIOUS ILLNESS MUST ASK YOU TO TAKE HIS PLACE SHALL SEND MAN FROM RESERVE LIST TO TRENGWITH THIS TO PREPARE YOU WRITING PRESIDENT.

"Well I'm blest," cried Jack, "that's short notice and no mistake. What shall you do about it, Willesford?"

"I shall have to go of course."

"But hang it all, man, can't you put in a special plea for continuing here, seeing that you have settled down to your work, and like the place and the people so much?"

"We are not supposed to put our personal preferences forward when unexpected demands are made upon our services."

"But really, the President might as well have pitched on some one else for this particular post and allowed you to carry on at Trengwith. It seems preposterous to me that you should leave just now. Of course I don't understand the hang of things in your church system, but the people here will be up in arms against your leaving, I am sure."

"I shall be dreadfully sorry to go," said Arthur, "but just as Army-men have to be prepared for sudden changes in the course of their military

duties, so it is with us, especially in the early stages of the ministry. The President's telegram seems to strike a very arbitrary note I must admit, but I feel sure that he would not have sent it but for some very pressing reasons which will probably be made clear when I receive his letter."

During this conversation Mrs. Mann had listened with such a lugubrious expression on her face that Arthur could not help laughing at her undisguised concern with regard to the contents of the telegram.

"Tid'n no laughin' matter," said she. "'Tez a wisht old job sure 'nuff. That there President wants talkin' to I zim, by some one who cud help un to see things vitty.

"Here you be, loved an' respected by 'one an' all,' church an' chapel alike. Everything gwain on suent in the circuit, an' Trengwith society never in a more flourishin' state, an' then you'm sent packin', an' tez busy-all ef us shall ever claps eyes on 'ee again."

"You certainly will, Mrs. Mann," Arthur replied. "It matters not where I may be sent, but of one thing you may feel assured, and that is that my love for Trengwith and its people will never die. I have had the happiest year of my life in this place, and I can never be sufficiently thankful that I came here, even for such a short time, for I have gained much that will be of the greatest value to me in the years to come.

"But I am not gone yet," he added, "so let us all cheer up and hope that everything will work out eventually for the best."

3

When Jack had gone and Mrs. Mann had resumed her household duties, Arthur sat down to think things out quietly. Jack's announcement of his engagement to Nancy, followed by the President's unsettling telegram, would vitally affect his career in more ways than one. Still he was not going to "grouse," and indeed there was much to cheer him in the thought that Frances was free to be wooed and won. He knew when he was appointed to Trengwith that possibly he might not stay the full ministerial term, for ministers on probation are more liable to unexpected changes than are those whose connection with their circuits are in line with the regulations which affect ordained and married men. He had loved his work at Trengwith, and had laid up a store of memories and experiences which would give him lasting satisfaction. He knew Trinity Church, where the vacancy was, and had preached there once during his student days. It would be a great change from Trengwith chapel with its extreme homeliness and simplicity. "Trinity" was a lovely building possessing every attraction in the way of architecture and interior refinements. The service was liturgical (at least in the morning) as is usual in many Wesleyan churches in and around London, where the order of service is, in the main, that of the English Prayer Book. Arthur had a great love for beauty and dignity where the details of public worship were concerned, and would therefore be able to enter most heartily into a

fuller and richer service of praise than that which was usual in country districts. It is to be feared that if Arthur's present Society Steward, John Trewhella, should by any chance find himself in a Wesleyan church of the "Trinity" type, he would be greatly upset, for to the rustic worshipper, "church is church, and chapel is chapel, and never the twain may meet"; but Arthur would find the liturgy a very real devotional help, and the evening service would give plenty of scope for a freer style of prayer and praise.

The intellectual atmosphere too would be greatly changed, for though essential religious truth is the same for city-folk as it is for villagers, yet its presentation, to be effective, must be on lines which make due allowance for the mentality produced by differing standards of social life and thought.

The charge of such a church would undoubtedly widen his pastoral experiences, and at the same time would probably call into active exercise latent powers of various kinds, which could hardly reach their full development in a rural environment.

So there it was! The Trengwith idyll was about to be closed, and Arthur could not but feel conscious of a great regret that such was the case

Still, on one matter his mind was now thoroughly made up. He would not leave Cornwall before he had told Frances Tresillian of his love, and the thought that he might possibly succeed in winning such a lovely and good girl thrilled his whole being, and enabled him to regard all minor matters with philosophical composure.

CHAPTER XIX

PULLING UP THE TENT-PEGS

ARTHUR was glad that his father and mother were still at Trengwith, for he felt in need of that kind of encouragement and advice which they would be sure to give him at this stage of his ministerial career.

They were, of course, greatly surprised at the suddenness of Arthur's call, but, as Mr. Willesford reminded his son, it was no more than any probationer might expect, seeing that it is easier, in case of emergency, for an unmarried man to respond to the S.O.S. appeal of a pastorless church, than for an older minister, in full charge of a circuit, to do so.

Arthur quite recognized the reasonableness of this view of the situation, and when, later, the President's promised letter arrived, explaining fully the nature of the difficulty which had arisen in the Wansgrove Circuit, the path of duty seemed perfectly plain. It would be a wrench, nevertheless, to leave Trengwith, for though Arthur's mental resources would find a fuller scope in the new sphere to which he was called, yet he realized gratefully how much he was indebted to his first simple, rural charge, for many valuable spiritual experiences, as

well as for those social and romantic privileges and impressions which had influenced him in such a wonderful way.

The news of his impending departure soon got about, for in a little place like Trengwith tidings for good or evil are soon made public property.

The attitude of Trengwith towards Official Methodism became at once somewhat strained, as might have been expected. To the rank and file of village Methodists in Cornwall "Conference" is a vague, grandiose term, used to denote an august assemblage of ruthless legislators, meeting in a vast building "Somewhere in England," and imposing its regulations upon the whole connection with machine-like efficiency and inexorable finality; while the President, although his legal power is tacitly admitted, is but rarely visualized as a real person. Scores of villagers—chapel-goers of the steadiest kind—would be puzzled if asked point-blank the name of the President in any current year. The rural *intelligentsia* of course know something about him for, being readers of excellent connexional newspapers and periodicals, they are kept in touch with general church events, and at Conference-time are always presented with a portrait of the distinguished Divine who is to sit in John Wesley's chair, and who, for twelve months, will be the chief official representative of his church. Still the fact remains that to many who live in the outlying country districts the President of the Conference is almost as mythical as the *Brontosaurus*, and this being so it can hardly be wondered at that the Trengwithians should "jib" at what

seemed to them an unreasoning and arbitrary exercise of official authority.

"Where was his common sense," they inquired, "in taking away, at the end of twelve months, the young minister who was serving them so well?"

During his ministry in Cornwall Arthur had realized the difficulty of getting the village-folk to grasp the idea of the church in its wider aspects of history and polity, and it certainly *is* difficult for minds lacking in certain details of ecclesiastical knowledge to see things in their true perspective.

The spiritual interests of many simple and devout souls are entirely bounded by the affairs of their local place of worship, and this is very characteristic of Cornish Methodists of the older school, who find it hard to enter with anything like real comprehension into any great denominational or social movements which may be in progress, and who prefer to go quietly on in traditional grooves of thought and custom. It can, therefore, be imagined that Arthur Willesford had his work cut out in answering querulous queries, quieting rebellious spirits, and getting his church-members into the right frame of mind for welcoming his successor.

"'Tez all very well, sir, for you to taälk to we," said one, "but us do knaw when us be well off, an' when we likes a praicher us 'baint willin' to let un go. That there President have given Trengwith a prapper scat in the faäce I do zim."

"Us'll never forget 'ee, sir," another added, "for you've entered into the life o' the plaäce just like wan o' ourselves. 'T'wud'n take much to turn 'ee into a Cornishman I rek'n. Best way

go an' marry a Cornish maid, then us shall be sure of 'ee."

"Perhaps I will," laughed Arthur. "I am fearfully sorry to have to go. I am sure you must realize that, and I do thank you 'One and All' for your good wishes and for your excellent advice."

2

Trengwith was certainly not lacking in excitements just now, for in addition to the impending ministerial change there was Jack Trengrouse's engagement to Nancy Mitchell to be thoroughly discussed. Nothing in the shape of a public announcement had been made, and yet, in the most mysterious way most of the villagers appeared to be in possession of the news.

Those who had taken it for granted that the Squire's son and "Miss Frances" would make a match of it were certainly surprised at the turn things had taken, but on the whole it was considered that Jack and Nancy were well suited to each other; besides, there had been no real grounds for the rumour which had circulated with regard to a probable matrimonial alliance between the Barton and Tremellan Hall. Jack and Frances had been friends from childhood, but they had never thought of one another in any other way than that of a comradeship quite natural between two young people having so much in common where their country-side interests were concerned.

Frances had seen clearly enough the way in

which things had been shaping between Jack and Nancy. It was evident to her that the former had received Cupid's *coup-de-grâce* at the Old Cornwall Concert, and that Nancy had fallen a victim to that intrepid bow-man about the same time. Still, when the actual engagement was declared, it all seemed wonderfully exciting to the two girls, and just about the time when Jack Trengrouse was telling Arthur Willesford all about his new-found happiness, Nancy was giving Frances the history of the whole affair in her room at the Barton.

"Oh Franky, it is *wonderful*," said she, "to think that Jack and I are really engaged. It has all happened so quickly—the love-making part I mean—for of course I never saw him 'till last Christmas, and it's only during this jolly summer holiday that we have really got to understand each other. But there's no mistake about it. He loves me and I love him, and that's all that really matters, although it is also very nice to know that the Squire and Mrs. Trengrouse seem quite pleased with Jack's choice, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is an altogether delightful affair, dear," Frances assured her friend, "and I am glad that your Cornish visit should have such a romantic result."

"But Franky," Nancy went on, "the mystery to me is that Jack did not fall in love with *you* rather than with me. You have known him so long, and I should have thought that you and he would naturally have come to care for each other."

"Things don't work out like that," Frances replied, "there has never been the slightest feeling

of that kind in our friendship. I am *very* glad to think that *you*, dear, have won Jack's love, and I feel certain that great happiness is in store for you both."

"Ah, well," said Nancy, "your turn will come, and sooner perhaps than you think. You are more quiet and reserved than I am, but I have noticed a few things lately which have caused me to fancy that you are not quite so heart-whole as you would wish people to imagine."

"Whatever *do* you mean, Nancy?" Frances inquired quickly, her face flushing in what was for her a most unusual way.

"Oh, I can't go into details," laughed Nancy, "but I have my intuitions, and I have eyes in my head. I know you better than any one else does I believe, and I feel sure somehow that Trengwith will have something more to talk about before very long."

"Rubbish," cried Frances, and, as the lunch-gong sounded precisely at that moment, matters remained unexplained.

3

During lunch Mrs. Tresillian and the girls heard the news about the President's telegram. Mr. Tresillian had met Jack Trengrouse as he (Jack) was returning to Tremellan after his visit to Arthur Willesford's lodgings.

"I really feel quite upset about it," Mr. Tresillian exclaimed, "for I quite thought, as no doubt

everyone else did, that Mr. Willesford would have stayed in our circuit for at least three years, and even then we should have been sorry to part with him, seeing that he has fitted into our ways so well, and has gained the confidence of 'One and All.'

"There is bound to be strong feeling as to the wisdom of his removal," he continued, "but I fear that we shall have to resign ourselves to the inevitable, and our loss will indeed be great."

Nancy glanced at Frances to see how she was being affected by the news, and felt sure that her friend, despite her outward air of cool self-possession, was a good deal perturbed by what she had heard.

Mrs. Tresillian was much more demonstrative than her daughter, and demanded that something should be done immediately to reverse the President's arrangements.

"Surely, John," she said, "you can get into touch with the Chairman of the District, and if he takes the matter up Mr. Willesford may be allowed to remain on here."

"I should not like to interfere," replied her husband, "for, after all, there are other interests than our own involved, and we must be loyal to authoritative decisions.

"Of course, we can't help feeling a bit selfish, for, quite apart from Mr. Willesford's helpful public ministry, we have come to regard him as a special friend. Here at the Barton he always seems so thoroughly happy, and he has entered into all our Cornish ways with extraordinary zest. In

fact I have never taken to any young minister as I have to him. Our talks, our music, our games of chess—it will seem strange, indeed, to think that these are at an end where he is concerned."

"Yes," chimed in Nancy, "'Tez a wisht job friends,' but the unexpected always happens, and for my part I venture to say that Arthur—I beg his pardon—Mr. Willesford—is so deeply in love with Trengwith, that although a ruthless President may order him to another sphere of work, his heart will remain 'down-along-o' we,' and I don't blame him, for *my* heart is here, too, you know."

"Yes," said Mrs. Tresillian, "*you* are all right, my dear, and we are all very glad to think that you have settled things so happily with Jack, and will soon be living amongst us, but though we are delighted to gain you we shall be indeed sorry to lose one whom we have come to look upon as one of our own."

"Perhaps he *will* be some day," said Nancy mischievously, risking a shot in Frances' direction. The remark was not without its effect, for Frances jumped up from the table with a decidedly heightened colour and reminded Nancy that they had arranged to go for a long ramble that afternoon, and that it was quite time they were starting.

The girls left the room together, and Mr. and Mrs. Tresillian looked at one another in a manner which indicated their mutual surprise at the suggestion Nancy had made with such apparent casualness, but which, nevertheless, contained the germ-thought of possible developments, such as

neither of them, up to that moment, had had the slightest reason to anticipate.

Mr. and Mrs. Willesford, Winifred, and Donald were returning home on the following day, and Mrs. Tresillian had invited them all—Arthur being of course included—to supper at the Barton. Nancy was to spend the evening at Tremellan, and Jack had arranged to drive down for her and bring her back.

As his people were busy preparing for their departure, and Donald had gone off for a final cycle spin, Arthur decided to spend his afternoon in a long solitary ramble, probably the last he would have time to take before leaving Trengwith. There would be much to do in the next few days. Packing must be done, many farewell calls made, and all details concerning pastoral oversight and church business generally, left in perfect order for his successor. Then also, he was planned to preach at St. Penza on the following Sunday morning, and at Trengwith in the evening. These farewell services were bound to be trying, for he had made innumerable friends during the happy twelve months he had spent in Cornwall, and felt very loth to have to say " good-bye " to them so soon.

He took the same way that he had taken on the first memorable Monday following his advent in Trengwith, and made for the same boulder-sheltered spot amidst the heather in order that he might give himself up to uninterrupted meditation, and revel once more in the superb sweep of the Cornish coast-line.

Naturally he found himself reviewing the events

and experiences of his ministerial year in Cornwall. It all seemed like a dream, so swiftly had the time passed, but it was certainly not one of those dreams which "fly forgotten," and which "die at the opening day," but one which could certainly be depended on through all his future life to furnish his memory with realistic recollections of intensely interesting happenings: a dream which rested on no "baseless fabric," but which was made up of intellectual and spiritual thoughts, feelings, and emotions, which would ever remain as integral factors and forces in his life's history.

Wherever his lot might be cast his mind would "hark back" to Trengwith. It would prove infinitely refreshing to think of the comparatively care-free days of his first probational year; a year lived in surroundings unrivalled in their natural beauty and deep poetical significance; a year filled with unique records of country-life seen at its best and notable for its humour, pathos, and happy social intercourse; a year which had proved that life may be full of zest for simple folk even though they may be somewhat indifferent to the elaborate programme of Politics, Fashion, and Sport, which is deemed to be so indispensable to rational existence by the conventional devotees of society.

The year, Arthur reflected, had also brought him a quite unlooked-for revelation of the strength of that wonderful emotional experience which in Tennysonian phraseology is termed, "a maiden-passion for a maid."

Hitherto he had speculated about love, had read about it in poems and in novels, had noted how

human life is swayed by it in every social grade, but now, for the first time, he felt its compelling power. He knew now that his love for Frances Tresillian was deep and true, and that it must no longer be disguised or repressed. To leave Cornwall without trying to discover whether or no there was any likelihood of his affection being returned would be unthinkable. To-night he might have an opportunity of speaking to her, and declaring the state of his feelings. And, oh! if it *should* be that she could come to care for him as he did for her, *what* a difference it would make in his life—in both their lives—and what a bright outlook for the future there would be for both of them, even though present circumstances were pointing to a temporary separation!

Dreaming thus amidst the heather, Arthur spent his afternoon in thoughtful solitude, returning home with just time enough in which to make himself presentable before joining the little supper party at the Barton.

CHAPTER XX

FACING THE MUSIC

ARTHUR had spent many happy evenings with the Tresillians, but the present one was destined to be the most memorable of them all. It was "great" to have his own folk there with him, sharing the social pleasures which so heightened the charm of his life in Trengwith—pleasures to which he had so often referred in his home letters. What the Barton had meant to him they might now see for themselves. It had become a second home—a place where a cordial welcome was always to be depended on, and where all that was most congenial to his intellectual and social tastes might constantly be found.

Mr. and Mrs. Willesford sought an opportunity during the evening of thanking their host and hostess for the great kindness they had shown to Arthur since his settlement in Trengwith, but Mr. and Mrs. Tresillian declared that the pleasure was all on their side.

"It has been a great privilege," Mr. Tresillian said, "to have in our midst a young minister who is so appreciative of the homely simplicities which go to make up our life here. His many gifts of mind and spirit have greatly endeared your son

to us, and I need hardly tell you that we shall all feel his going away very keenly."

"Still," Mr. Willesford insisted, "Arthur has had a wonderfully happy time here. Your ever-open door, and your never-failing spirit of genuine friendship, have greatly helped him. His mother and I feel deeply indebted to you, and all the more so because you have allowed *us* also, during this grand August holiday, to share the many delights which your charming Cornish home affords."

Arthur had determined that he would get a word with Frances alone, and had suggested to her that they should go into the drawing-room after supper and try over some new music which she had recently ordered, and of which she had been speaking during the meal.

Frances was looking very charming this evening. Her dainty frock of black and rose *georgette* set off her dark beauty to perfection, and never had she seemed more lovely in Arthur's eyes. To him she was the very ideal of sweet and gracious girlhood, and, difficult though it might be for him to overcome his reserve, he felt instinctively that, if he failed to speak now of what was in his heart, such a chance might not come to him again.

So then and there, in the fast-fading twilight, he managed to tell Frances of the great love for her which had taken possession of his whole being, so that to leave Trengwith without speaking of it was impossible.

The reason why we cannot give an accurate stenographic account of Arthur's declaration of

love on this ever-to-be-remembered evening is simply that we do not know precisely *what* terms were used.

Is it really possible, my dear readers, to describe a love-scene in a manner that is perfectly satisfactory?

In some old-fashioned novels the heroes and heroines often indulge in long well-balanced speeches which do credit alike to their command of prosody and to their general intellectual attainments. But, as shorthand writers are not usually present when lovers lay bare their hearts to one another, we can only venture to leave details of expression to the romantic imaginations of those who are specially interested.

Words, after all, can only partially reveal the deepest emotions of human nature, and to insist on the *ipsissima verba* of a proposal is to fall short of that artistic standard which demands that a certain reserve should be maintained when attempting to deal with Life's most sacred experiences.

Was Frances taken altogether by surprise at Arthur's confession, think you?

Perhaps not. The ways of the little Love God are subtle and mysterious, and even those who give few outward signs of being affected by his manœuvres, may all at once realize that the unexpected has happened—as it always does.

The more Frances had seen of Arthur the more she had admired and respected him. His devotion to his high spiritual calling, his intellectual and social gifts, his manly bearing, his really deep love for Cornwall and its people—all these qualities

and tastes had appealed to her strongly. She certainly had not dreamt—at least at the commencement of their friendship—that things would take the turn they had, but Arthur's sudden call to the London Church had altered everything, and she had found herself wondering what Trengwith would be like when he was no longer there. Her life could never be quite the same now to her, for his coming into it had made a great difference. Their friendship, originally based upon similarity of tastes as regards books, music, love of Nature, out-door pursuits, and so forth, had certainly of late taken a deeper note, though no word had been spoken by either of them to indicate the desire for a still more intimate relationship.

If Arthur had been staying on at Trengwith it is quite probable (even in spite of Nancy Mitchell's engagement to Jack Trengrouse) that he would have continued to keep his feelings to himself, but now the situation demanded a frank facing of facts, and as Frances listened with a lovely blush to Arthur's nervous, but entirely candid expression of his love for her, she realized, as many a maiden in similar circumstances has done, that the momentous moment had arrived when the utterance of a simple "yes" or "no" would alter the whole current of her life, and decide, once and for all the question of her future happiness.

So there it was! And *something* must have happened, for, when presently Mrs. Tresillian came into the room to inquire how the musical studies were getting on, she found two lovers there, sitting hand in hand on the chesterfield, evidently thoroughly

pleased with each other, as lovers have ever been, from time immemorial, when a perfectly satisfactory understanding has been arrived at.

Arthur jumped to his feet and began his explanations at once.

"Mrs. Tresillian, you must try to forgive me. You can see how it is. I love Frances dearly, and I have just told her so. I could not help it, it *had* to be here and now. I ought to have spoken to you and Mr. Tresillian before speaking to Frances, but I simply *could* not wait. Please do not blame me harshly. If you and Mr. Tresillian will consent to our engagement I shall be the happiest man in the world."

"Well, I never did!" exclaimed Mrs. Tresillian who, as she afterwards confessed, "had received the shock of her life."

"Neither did I," replied Arthur, somewhat incoherently. "At least I never did it until now, for, like Richard of Taunton Deane, 'I never was in love avore!'"

2

The other members of the party now came in from the drawing-room, and great was their astonishment when they were told of what had happened.

Mr. Tresillian, usually calm enough, whatever might be the emergency he had to face, was now (to use a Cornish colloquialism) "knacked all of a heap".

Winifred, as a newly engaged person, of course regarded the whole situation as being quite in harmony with the best traditions of genuine romance, while Donald, unaccustomed to emotional crises, and feeling himself to be somewhat "out of the picture," slipped away for a last walk over the towans, after assuring his brother and prospective sister-in-law of his entire approval of their conduct, adding that, in his opinion, "Arthur was a very lucky beggar."

Mr. and Mrs. Willesford, it is hardly necessary to say, were just as bewildered as Mr. and Mrs. Tresillian were. There seemed to be so many things that ought to be discussed before a calmly-considered approval could be given to an engagement between the two young people. Arthur and Frances, however, looked (as indeed they were) so radiantly happy, that in a very short time, that which had appeared at first to be so startling came to be accepted as an accomplished fact, and, as the engagement would have to be a fairly long one, there would be plenty of time for Frances' parents to get accustomed to the idea of parting with their daughter when at last she should be claimed at their hands by the husband of her choice.

Our account of the culminating point in Arthur Willesford's life at Trengwith has perhaps not been described with that wealth of dramatic detail so dear to multitudes accustomed to have the poignant passions of lovers minutely "featured" by facile pens and clicking cameras; but, a really genuine love affair, in our view, needs no tricks of art to heighten its idyllic quality, for real love is not

concerned with momentary acts and emotions, but is based on a deeper conception of Life's issues than is that variety which seeks for the satisfaction of a present overwhelming impulse.

Both Arthur and Frances, as the result of influences which had affected them ever since they had become susceptible to the value of high moral and spiritual ideals, were fully aware of the dangers which might possibly attend a union not founded upon a perfect harmony of tastes and principles, but they had had unusual opportunities for the establishing of a complete confidence in one another, and not the shadow of a doubt existed between them as to the wisdom of the course they had decided to take. In the matter of age they were well matched. Frances was just twenty-one. Arthur had passed his twenty-third birthday and would therefore be twenty-six by the time he was in a position to marry. It all seemed "just right," at any rate from their point of view, and although Frances would find it very strange at first to launch out into an entirely different kind of life from that to which she was accustomed in her Cornish home, yet she was quite prepared to take all risks for the sake of the man she loved, as many a maid has done before, and will again.

All kinds of serious talks would no doubt have to take place between the parents on both sides relating to domestic and financial arrangements, but there was time enough and to spare for all that sort of thing, and meanwhile the thrill caused by the sense of a complete understanding eclipsed everything else. Prosaic details might be post-

poned, for was not this the golden time of "Love's young dream?"

When Jack Trengrouse brought Nancy back from Tremellan later in the evening there was another "flutter in the dovecot."

Jack simply let himself go when he heard the news.

"Great work, Willesford, old man!" cried he. "You quiet johnnies know what you are about, that's certain. You never gave me the *slightest* hint that there was anything in the wind, and I never thought that you cared for Frances in this way, even when you made that mistake about my engagement.

"Well, all I can say is that we are making things fairly hum here in Trengwith. First of all Frank Wilson and Winifred go and get engaged, then Nancy and I vow to love and cherish each other 'till the end of Time,' and now you and Frances hit the same trail!

"There must be something in the air of Trengwith—the ozone most likely in a highly concentrated state—to account for such a condition of affairs. Good egg, old man, and the best of luck to you both."

"Now Franky," said Nancy, after kissing Frances enthusiastically on both cheeks, "was I not absolutely right? What about my intuitions *now?* Didn't I say that Mr. Willesford—Arthur as I shall call him in future, of course—would come to be 'one of our own?' I *am* glad for both your sakes, for I feel certain that you have much joy in store. I am glad, too, to think that you can't

be married yet, for we shall be able to look forward to some jolly times down here together before the 'I wills' are spoken, and even after that, for you will always belong to Trengwith, and will be 'traäpsin' down homalong' with 'His Reverence' pretty often I'll be bound, and even *without* him whenever he can spare you."

The older folk wisely left most of the talking to the young people on this exciting occasion. It was delightful to see them so happy and confident. Life would bring its inevitable ups and downs to them. They would have to "face the music" in more ways than one, and sometimes the strains would not be so concordant as they happened to be on this betrothal eve.

But life, wherever it may be lived—in crowded city or in secluded village—is bound to have its variants of light and shadow, harmony and discord, beauty and its opposite. Meanwhile, why should anything be allowed to interfere with the spirit of happiness and hope which had taken possession of youthful hearts, full of optimism regarding the future, and full of a great desire to live "the more abundant life"?

In the years to come how vividly they would all remember this wonderful evening which marked the beginning of a life-long compact of love between a "Christian man and maid."

CHAPTER XXI

AVE ATQUE VALE

THE last few days of Arthur Willesford's ministerial term in Trengwith passed with incredible swiftness. The news that he was "tokened" to "our Miss Frances" soon got abroad, and he had to run the gauntlet of congratulations from one end of the village to the other.

A story is told of a visitor to the West Country who happened to pass a certain churchyard just after a funeral had taken place. There were signs indicating that the ceremony had been of unusual importance, and the visitor ventured to question the sexton, who was about to fill in the grave, as to the history and character of the deceased.

"Yes sir," the sexton replied to the queries which had been put to him, "'twas a ter'ble big fooneral sure 'nuff. You see 'twas our old Squire. He've a-lived in thik parish nigh on seb'nty year, but he was took off suddint at the last."

"Dear me, how very sad," said the visitor, "and what was the complaint?"

"Aw! There baint no complaint, sir," was the answer, "*everybody be very well plaized.*"

And so at Trengwith, in quite another interpretation of the phrase, "everybody was well plaized" to hear of the success which had attended their minister's love affair. *Now* "the sadness of

farewell" would be greatly mitigated, indeed there need be no need for sadness at all, for their friend and pastor was forging a link with Trengwith which could never more be broken. He was going away from them, it was true, but his heart would be here "along o' Miss Frances," and the "Cornish Riviera Express" would soon "bring'n 'ome," whenever the way was clear for him to come.

Having arrived at such a perfect understanding with Frances, Arthur's heart was full of a deep content, and the fact that he was leaving Cornwall did not worry him as it would have done if the great question had still been unsettled.

The thought that his love was returned would be his greatest source of earthly joy as he worked away in his new sphere, for there is nothing in a young man's life that can transcend in moral value, "The maiden passion for a maid":

"Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought, and amiable words,
And courtliness, and the desire of Fame,
And love of Truth, and all that makes a man."

On the last Sunday in August Arthur preached his farewell sermons at St. Penza and Trengwith. There was a very large congregation at "Wesley" in the morning, for although the young probationer had had no pastoral responsibilities at St. Penza his pulpit utterances had been very highly appreciated by the folk there, and very keen was their regret that his ministry among them had to be concluded so suddenly.

In the vestry, after the service, Arthur had a pleasant surprise. He found both circuit stewards waiting for him there, with several other leading officials, who presented him with a silver pocket-communion set, together with a number of valuable books for his library, amongst which he was delighted to find one or two volumes devoted to Cornish history, topography, and archæology. Although there had been so little time in which to arrange for the testimonial, the care and taste shown in selecting such suitable gifts were most commendable, and the senior steward explained to Arthur that there had been no general canvass to raise funds for the presentation, but that a number of friends had spontaneously desired, in this quiet way, to show their appreciation of his character and of the value of his spiritual work in their midst.

Arthur's evening service at Trengwith was a very memorable one. The chapel was crowded out, for, in addition to the regular worshippers, large numbers were present from all parts of the neighbourhood.

Cornish people dearly love a bit of extra excitement in connection with their church and chapel-going, and many were keen to hear the farewell message of the young minister who had so thoroughly identified himself with local interests, and whose love for Cornwall had been expressed in such a strikingly romantic fashion as to leave no room for doubt as to its sincerity.

"All the world loves a lover," and when that lover happened to be a minister already well beloved for his work's sake, it was no wonder that so many people from near and far were anxious to

attend the service which would conclude his ministry in Trengwith.

Arthur could not restrain, even had he desired to do so, the wave of deep emotion which surged up within him as he entered the now familiar rostrum for the last time as minister-in-charge. Faced by this crowd of well-disposed and eagerly expectant people, representing different grades of social life, but all united by a common bond of religious interest, it was no wonder that he felt with a peculiar acuteness his position of spiritual responsibility with regard to them. For one short year he had ministered here, striving to prove himself a faithful steward of the mysteries of God. That his work had often fallen short of his ideals he had often been sorrowfully conscious, but in spite of this he had had abundant evidence that his ministry, in the main, had appealed to his hearers, and there were present that evening many whose lives he knew had been definitely influenced for lasting good as the result of his teaching and personal example.

There was every reason, therefore, to "thank God and take courage," and by the time the purely devotional part of the service was concluded, he had lost the feeling of nervousness which had at first possessed him, and was able to speak with more than usual calmness, self-possession, and power.

His sermon was very simple, but every word seemed to tell. His text was from St. Paul's epistle to the Philippians—that wonderful document which has been rightly termed the Apostle's "love letter."

Farewell addresses are sometimes very trying affairs. There is always the danger of striking too personal a note, or of becoming unduly sentimental. Arthur was careful not to commit either of these indiscretions, but devoted his twenty minutes or so to emphasizing the appropriate exhortation of the great preacher, who, in the early days of Christianity, addressed in this beautiful letter a farewell message to those who had been associated with him in Christian work and worship.

Just as in Philippi, so here at Trengwith, there were three things to be kept constantly in view as constituting the very essence of Christianity. Purity of life; Unity of spirit; Directness of spiritual aim. Speaking briefly on each of these important requirements in individual and corporate religious life, the preacher "got home" every time, and after putting in a word for the "new man" who would soon be in their midst— asking for him the same spirit of "good-will" which they had shown towards their retiring pastor—the service drew to an end. Charles Wesley's famous parting hymn was then sung:

And let our bodies part,
To different climes repair;
Inseparably joined in heart
The friends of Jesus are.

Jesus the corner-stone
Did first our hearts unite,
And still He keeps our spirits one
Who walk with Him in white.

Many eyes were wet during the singing of this old-time hymn to the plaintive tune *Canada*, for the "people called Methodists" are not ashamed of showing their emotion when their hearts are deeply moved, and indeed, why should they be?

The singing over, all heads were reverently bowed while the words of the benediction rang out in clear bell-like tones:—"May the God of Peace Himself, sanctify you wholly, and may your spirits, souls, and bodies be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

The general impression left on the minds of those who had heard Arthur's farewell message may be gathered from John Trewhella's summing up of the whole matter. For once this critical official seemed to be absolutely satisfied.

"I never heard the young man du better," he admitted, "he've a-excelled hisself this evenin', an' hath a-gived us the 'pure milk o' the word.' Ef he du go on like that he'll pruve hisself to be a Master in Israel sure 'nuff, same as us raids about in Ekkle-si-astes, last chapter, verse leb'n. 'The words o' the wise be as goads, an' as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies.'

"Ted'n only drivin' in the nails, tez the *clinchin'* ov 'em that shaws the master-'and, an', zimmin' to me, the Reverend Willesford have a-done that to-night.

"Every point was drawve straight 'ome, and clinched vitty 'pon 'tother zide, an' ef we all du live up to what he've a-praiched to we, us can't go very far wrong.

"'Your manner o' life,' sez 'e; ezackly! That's what tells. Holiness; which be only a scripshural tarm for sperritual health. Religion mains that we must love God, an' the awnly way us can do so ez by lovin' the *laws* an' *prenciples* which have come from the mind o' God, an' which be reflected in the charriter an' taichin' of our Blesséd Lord.

"'*In wan Sperrit.*' Well, ef us can't have *that* us mays'well give up to wance. All this here controversy an' strivin' for office what do go on in some sercities ez contrairy to the sperrit o' the Master. I heard tell t'other day of a chapel stooard in a certain village, who'd held the position for years an' years, an' when the Super suggested electin' another in he's plaäce for a chaänge, this here stooard said, 'Ef I baint nominated I shall laive the Wesleyans, an' go up to the higher chapel 'long wi' the Primitives!'

"Shaäme on en! How can a church succeed ef such a selfish sperrit as that pervails? An' then the last point. *Strivin' together for the Faith o' the Gospel.* 'For the Faith o' the Gospel,' mark you. We must strive—not to 'score' off other denominations, by strivin' to get on top zo to spaik because us fancies us have got a better standin' in the commoonity—but strivin' so as to make the Gospel, the religion of Jesus, a livin', transformin' power here at Trengwith an' throughout the world. Listenin' to sermons ez a luxury, us do all enjoy them, when they be gude wans, but there must be self sacrifice, an' a mort o' downright hard lousterin' work ef us be to make proper headway."

So, in the homely vernacular, the sermon was preached over again, and it was evident that its leading thoughts were not likely to be soon forgotten by the members of the Trengwith society.

2

Frances waited for Arthur at the close of the service (just as he hoped she would do), and when the congregation had dispersed they went out together towards the sea, choosing a secluded spot amidst the towans where they were sure to be undisturbed. Arthur's day had been a very full, and indeed, exciting one, but now that his duties were over his whole being was free to respond to the wonderful influences of the place and hour.

In the matter of his engagement to Frances he still seemed to be in a waking dream, but it was real enough, there could be no mistake about it, for she was here alone with him, this incomparable Cornish maiden, and her dear hand was in his as they sat in their sheltered rush-fringed hollow watching the ebbing tide fling its reluctant waves along the wide, wet sands.

How absolutely perfect it all was! It was just as if the Spirit of Cornwall was saying to both of them, "Take the very best of what I am able to give you, O fortunate man and maid. The years that stretch out before you will bring cares as well as joys, but *now* let nothing come between you and your happiness in each other. What if you cannot find words at such a time as this wherewith

to express the tumultuous emotions of your hearts? It matters not, for, 'only deepest silence can the deepest passion prove.' You both belong to Me. One of you My child from birth, the other Mine by adoption, and wherever your future lot may be cast, My spell shall be over you, and My rocky Kingdom shall be the home of your dearest earthly memories unto your Life's end."

Long did the lovers linger in their sweet retreat, and nought there was to mar the peace and beauty of their idyll. But now the day was dying. Each moment the sun was sinking lower in the crimson and amber West. Across the bay there stole a breeze which thrilled through the rushes on the towans, causing them to sigh with soft Aeolian music. Against the sky-line, clear-cut, and gleaming in the sunset's glow, stood the lighthouse-tower; the great cliffs away to the north loomed with a mysterious grandeur soon now to be hidden under the sable pall of night. A belated sea-gull flew close above their heads with a weird piercing cry, making for its home upon a distant crag. On the horizon a steamer's slanting smoke-cloud could be faintly discerned, mingling at last with the pearly-grey of deepening twilight. And, as night's curtain was falling over land and sea, the lovers rose, and ere they left this haunt of delicious enchantment their lips met in a long, long kiss, which set its sacred seal on all the emotions and experiences of this perfect day.

. . . . . .

The next few days were full of stir and bustle.

Arthur had to leave on Friday in order to be in time to take up his duties in his new circuit on the following Sunday.

On the Tuesday evening a Farewell Meeting was held in the schoolroom. Everybody who could possibly come did so, for the folks could not let him go without telling him how they loved him. To Arthur's great relief this proved to be a very happy, informal sort of gathering. There were a few speeches, but when these were over there was an opportunity to mix with those present in a purely social way. Mr. Tresillian, on behalf of the Society of Trengwith presented Arthur with a fountain pen, an umbrella, and a travelling-bag, in order that he might possess some tangible tokens of their esteem. Arthur felt quite unworthy of all the fuss they were making over his departure, for Trengwith had given to him, he considered, far more than he had given to it. At the same time he could not help feeling very glad to think that he had won such a place of affection in the hearts of those to whom, twelve months ago he had been an entire stranger.

Friday came at last. Mrs. Mann had baked several pasties in her very best manner.

"I reckon," she said, "that you'll be leary long before you get to Plymouth, an' they pasties'll stiffen 'ee up braäve. You can get a cup o' tay for threepence from a tender 'pon the platform, an' if you don't ait all they pasties in the train they'll come in 'andy vor supper when you get to Lunnon. I zim they'll be the last you'll get till you come down-along to Trengwith again!"

Arthur showed his appreciation of Mrs. Mann's motherly care by giving her what she afterwards described as "a whackin' gurt kiss." His presents to her had been a handsome clock for her parlour mantel-piece, and a framed portrait of himself, and the receipt of these gifts, accompanied by warm words of appreciation, had made her the proudest house-wife in the village.

3

On the last Friday in August Arthur left Trengwith. Frances herself drove him up to Gwavas Road Station in good time to catch the London Express. She stopped the dog-cart at the top of the hill in order that Arthur might have a last look (for the time) at the scene he loved so well. He thought of the Friday eve of his arrival, exactly twelve months ago, when Peter Harris had paused at the same spot, and when the spell of the place had first been cast over him. How much had happened since! He had had a truly wonderful time, and with Frances by his side his heart was overflowing with a deep content.

Trengwith had never looked lovelier. The village lay dreaming in the morning sun. The lighthouse, the cliffs, the gleaming sands, fringed with lace-like edgings of foam, the deep blue ocean, the wheeling sea-gulls—there they all were, with their never-failing appeal to his nature-loving soul.

It was hard to be leaving all this for the more

conventional life which awaited him, but still, to have lived here for a year, and to have had such memorable experiences had been a glorious privilege. No matter what interesting changes the future might bring in the course of his ministerial career, Trengwith would stand out for ever as a place enshrining for him all that was most satisfying in the essential elements which go to make up real earthly happiness.

At the station they found Jack and Nancy waiting with a hamper of fruit from Tremellan.

"I'll send some birds later on," said Jack, "when the shooting begins. Or most likely I shall bring them, for I am coming up to town in the autumn, and shall soon be seeing you again, so our 'good-bye' need not be a very sorrowful one."

"Certainly not," said Nancy, "and I want you, Frances, to come up and stay with me for a good long spell, and then we shall be able to meet and enjoy all sorts of things together, whenever Arthur is at liberty to join us. Our 'good times' are not ending, but only just beginning."

But now the train swept round the bend of the line, the luggage was got aboard, the last farewells were spoken, a kiss between the parting lovers exchanged (which, judging from the fatherly smile on the face of the guard, met with that official's entire approbation), the whistle sounded, and the happiest young probationer in England was borne away swiftly along the shining highway which led to "fresh woods and pastures new."

THE END.

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